

FAITH INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY AND FAITH SEMINARY

**EQUIPPING OUTREACH LEADERS TO ENGAGE EFFECTIVELY
EMERGING ADULTS IN THE COMMUNITY**

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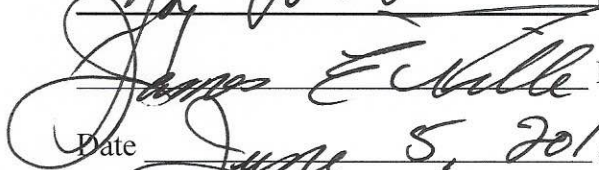
EQUIPPING OUTREACH LEADERS TO ENGAGE EFFECTIVELY
EMERGING ADULTS IN THE COMMUNITY

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ABSTRACT

The ministry project facilitator sought to equip church outreach leaders to engage effectively Emerging Adults within the community. The facilitator conducted six two-hour outreach leader training sessions consisting of the following topics: (1) understanding the Emerging Adult developmental stage; (2) experiencing personal growth through cultural fluency; (3) improving communication skills; and (4) creating a context-specific, culturally sensitive plan for engaging Emerging Adults. The facilitator led three follow-up support groups for the participants to reinforce skills learned. The writer provided a thorough bibliography and extensive appendices to support the research contained in this project report. The project analysis demonstrated that with training leaders will engage more effectively the Emerging Adult population by creating and utilizing context-specific, culturally sensitive outreach plans.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Christian church has been a cornerstone of American life for centuries, but much has changed in the last 30 years. Americans are attending church less, and more people are experiencing and practicing their faith outside of its four walls. Millennials, in particular, are coming of age at a time of great skepticism and cynicism toward institutions—particularly the church.¹

Millennials, more specifically the 18-to-25-year-olds referred to by Jeffrey Arnett as Emerging Adults,² are indeed coming of age and becoming increasingly disengaged with faith communities across the United States. As a result, the number of Emerging Adults in churches is steadily declining. Research from The Barna Group shows nearly 156 million United States residents (of all ages) are not actively engaged in the Christian church. Of these, roughly 42 million are children and teenagers.³

Members of this newly theorized developmental stage claim to be spiritual while not being religious. They appear to seek spiritual experiences rather than relationship with God. A variety of studies involving college-age students shows, “. . . a range of religiously unaffiliated millennials [who] say that they are spiritual, have spiritual needs, place importance on spiritual growth, or commit to integrating spirituality into their lives.”⁴

¹Barna Group, The. “Research Releases in Faith and Christianity: The State of the Church 2016.” September 2016. Accessed January 17, 2017. <https://www.barna.com/research/state-church-2016/>.

²Arnett, Jeffrey J. *Emerging Adulthood: Understanding the New Way of Coming of Age*. Washington, DC, US: American Psychological Association, 2006.

³Barna Group, The. “Articles in Faith and Christianity: 10 Facts About America’s Churchless.” December 2014. Accessed January 17, 2017. <https://www.barna.com/research/10-facts-about-americas-churchless/#>.

⁴Bahan, Samantha A. “The Spirituality of Atheist and ‘No Religion’ Individuals in the Millennial Generation: Developing New Research Approaches for a New Form of Spirituality.” *The Arbutus Review*,

Because traditional outreach leaders are inadequately equipped to minister effectively to Emerging Adults, these leaders are failing to engage and thus evangelize this unique portion of the Millennial generation. Traditional outreach leaders also appear to misunderstand how to utilize liminal space as a platform for emerging adult outreach.

In his book, *The Faith of Leap*, Alan Hirsch expounds on this concept of liminality:

Liminality is the term we use to describe a threshold experience. It is composed of any or a combination of danger, marginality, disorientation, or ordeal and tends to create a space that is neither here nor there, a transitional stage between what was and what is to come. As a result, it is experienced as a place of discomfort and agitation that requires us to endure and push into what is to come.⁵

By recognizing liminality, thresholds of passage, as the driving force behind what helps to engage Emerging Adults in relationships and the formation of community, traditional outreach leaders will gain much needed insight into the hearts and minds of these young people. Capturing the hearts and minds of these young people through authentic relationships has the potential to create liminal space, draw them into relationship with Jesus Christ, and experience true spirituality.

The application of this knowledge is such that outreach leaders can alter the way outreach is currently being conducted with Emerging Adults and become more effective in subsequent efforts. According to his research at the *Francis A. Schaeffer Institute of Church Leadership Development*, Dr. Richard Krejcir has found, “Every year more than 4000 churches close their doors compared to just over 1000 new church starts.”⁶ If church

Vol. 6, no. 1 (Fall 2015): 63-75.

⁵Hirsch, Alan. *The Faith of Leap*. Grand Rapids, MI Baker Books, 2011. 19.

⁶Krejcir, Richard J. “Statistics and Reasons for Church Decline.” Francis A. Schaeffer Institute of Leadership and Development, 2007. Accessed online January 18, 2017.
<http://www.churchleadership.org/apps/articles/default.asp?articleid=42346&columnid=4545>.

outreach efforts fail to engage effectively the Emerging Adult population, faith communities will continue closing their doors due to a lack of interest and attendance. More significantly, Emerging Adults will fail to encounter the God that promises both reconciliation and restoration from the consequences of sin.

Chapel Hill Presbyterian Church does not currently have effective evangelism approaches for Emerging Adults. This has stifled the young millennial presence in one of Gig Harbor's largest churches. When I proposed the idea of training outreach leaders to engage in relationship with Emerging Adults and create liminal spaces for spiritual exploration, I was met with great enthusiasm. Church leadership expressed a great need to minister to this group of young people in a more effective manner and turn their hearts toward God again, or perhaps for the first time.

CHAPTER 2

PRESENTATION OF PROBLEM AND PURPOSE STATEMENT

Problem

After a cursory review of literature identifying developmental characteristics, current evangelism strategies, and the role of liminal spaces for the years 2000 through 2016, a significant discrepancy surfaced. Church outreach leaders seem to have failed to recognize the cultural context in which they share the Gospel with emerging adults. Not only are they failing to consider the cultural context within which they minister, many are failing to conduct outreach at all. Most church leaders are either from the Boomer generation (born between 1946 through 1964) or the Buster generation (born between 1965 through 1980), both of whom have seen a marked decrease in the practice of evangelism.⁷ These oversights have contributed to a generation of young people leaving the church, being wounded by it, or deciding to oppose its traditional values.

In her book, *Generation Me*, Dr. Jean Twenge states, “Church attendance across all faiths has declined 30 percent since the 1950’s, and about half of the decline occurred since the 1980’s.”⁸ The Barna Group reports similar statistics since 1980. With secularism on the rise, the “churchless” are not completely unfamiliar with the church experience, but rather it would be more accurate to refer to them “de-churched,” as they have left the church for

⁷Barna Group, The. “Research Releases in faith and Christianity: Is Evangelism Going Out of Style?”. December 2013. Accessed online January 17, 2017. <https://www.barna.com/research/is-evangelism-going-out-of-style/>.

⁸Twenge, Jean M., Ph. D. *Generation Me*. New York, NY: Free Press, 2006. 12.

one reason or another after having attended for a period.⁹ “Millennials are leaving the church. Nearly six in ten (59%) young people who grow up in Christian churches end up walking away, and the unchurched segment among Millennials has increased in the last decade from 44% to 52%, mirroring a larger cultural trend away from churchgoing in America.”¹⁰

With greater access to information, opinions, and peer influences via social media and the Internet, Emerging Adults have become skeptical of society as well as institutions such as government and churches. These elements have drastically influenced the worldviews, attitudes, and behaviors of this unique group. One such impact is the change of, and in some cases elimination of, liminal rites of passage among emerging adults.

Rites of passage, in both church and society, are necessary for emerging adults to assimilate into their community, deepen connections with peers and mentors, connect with true meaning and purpose in life, and ultimately encounter true spirituality. Without these liminal experiences, Emerging Adults disengage from faith and secular communities and attempt to recreate these essential milestones in non-conventional, and sometimes, unhealthy ways.

The Ravi Zacharias International Ministries (RZIM) designs mission trips to college campuses such as Arizona State University and the University of California, Berkeley. During these trips, participants actively engage in outreach to the 18-25-year-old population. The most effective and least effective strategies for evangelism and

⁹Barna Group, The. “Research Releases in Culture and Media: 5 Trends Among the Unchurched.” October 2014. Accessed January 17, 2017. <https://www.barna.com/research/five-trends-among-the-unchurched/>.

¹⁰Barna Group, The. “Research Releases in Leaders and Pastors: The Priorities, Challenges, and Trends in Youth Ministry.” April 2016. Accessed January 17, 2017. <https://www.barna.com/research/the-priorities-challenges-and-trends-in-youth-ministry/>.

engagement were relatively obvious while observing the participants interacting with the students. Participants witnessed the impact of liminal encounters with God through interactions and relationships with His people. However, participants also witnessed the heart-wrenching walls created by intellectual sparring with apologetics. This generation appears to need to know someone cares about them as an individual before they are willing to listen and consider what the person is saying. Participants discovered that intellectual sparring was unproductive, unpersuasive, and inefficient in truly communicating the Gospel message to this demographic.

It is imperative for church outreach leaders to understand the efficacy of evangelism efforts, evaluate the response of their audience, and create a strategic plan to equip leaders to be both culturally sensitive and responsive to today's culture. Outreach leaders need to gain insight into their own biases, influencing attitudes, and limitations surrounding Emerging Adults. This will provide leaders a greater understanding of their personal efficacy as evangelists, how to live incarnate lives, and positively influence the next generation.

This project will potentially bridge the current generational gap by: (1) building meaningful and authentic relationships, (2) creating culturally sensitive environments for Emerging Adults to explore spirituality and experience God's love, as well as (3) establishing purpose and meaning by connecting God's outreach leaders to the rhythms of the Emerging Adult culture.

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to equip a selected group of outreach leaders from Chapel Hill Presbyterian Church to engage effectively Emerging Adults through authentic relationships outside traditional church structure.

CHAPTER 3

THEOLOGICAL RATIONALE

God Created Humans for Relationships

Although the Bible does not use the terms “Trinity” or “Triune” to describe God, humans have coined the term to describe the relationship between the distinct persons of God’s existence with one another. The term was first used by the Christian writer Tertullian around AD 200 to describe the relationship of the three persons of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Further evidence exists that the concept was used prior to Tertullian, however, the term did not exist as part of church vocabulary until this time.¹¹ The Trinitarian view of God clearly demonstrates the relational aspect of humanity’s existence. Since Trinitarian thought was prominent early in Christianity’s history, it is vital to look at the roots of Christianity for clarity and understanding.

The early Christian church is best understood by examining Judaism. Christianity shares the Old Testament and its theological foundation with Judaism. Unlike Christianity, Judaism does not recognize the inspiration of the New Testament, the messiahship of Jesus Christ or, consequently, a shared future with Christianity.¹² Although there is much evidence to support a Trinitarian view of God, Judaism does not recognize the Trinity of

¹¹Allison, Gregg. *Historical Theology: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine, a companion to Wayne Grudem's Systematic theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011.

¹²Rich, Tracey R. “Judaism 101: Mashiach- The Messiah.” 2011. Accessed online April 26, 2017. <http://www.jewfaq.org/mashiach.htm>.

God. The text of the Sh'ma, which begins in Deuteronomy 6:4¹³, Judaism's central prayer and often the first verse of scripture that Jewish children learn, states, "Hear O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is One." Judaism cites this verse as the primary evidence which results in the monotheistic view of God that was adopted and promoted by its the founding father, Abraham, approximately 4000 years ago.¹⁴

Christianity and Judaism differ in their respective views of the composition of God's being, although not His essence. Contrary to Christianity, Judaism holds the monotheistic perspective that God is one being with one essence, rather than the three beings and one essence, as Trinitarian thought contends. This is Judaism's primary argument for the rejection of New Testament divine inspiration and the Messiahship of Jesus Christ, as both clearly proclaim God's Trinity through the person of Jesus Christ and the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Postmodern Emerging Adults have developed a different theory about "God" that is neither monotheistic or triune. Born out of the spirit of idealism and individualistic thinking, Emerging Adults appear to discard the idea of a being called "God" and have developed a homocentric spirituality. This kind of spirituality replaces "God" with a vague, and often conflicting, spiritual philosophies and practices like those found among modern Buddhist practitioners.¹⁵ It is essential to gain a solid working knowledge of the Emerging Adult philosophy and practices of spirituality prior to developing effective evangelism and

¹³Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are taken from the *Holy Bible: English Standard Version* published by Crossway and copyrighted in 2008.

¹⁴Religion Library: Judaism. "Judaism Origins, Judaism History, and Judaism Beliefs." 2008-. Accessed January 3, 2017. <http://www.patheos.com/Library/Judaism>.

¹⁵For this project, all references to "Buddhism" will refer to Theravada Buddhism which draws its spiritual inspiration from the Pali Canon, which has been accepted as the oldest record of Buddhist teachings. It is estimated that there are over 100 million Theravada Buddhist practitioners world-wide.

engagement strategies for this group.

“In recent decades, this interest in [the teachings of the Theravada] has swelled, with the monastic Sangha from the various schools within Theravada establishing dozens of monasteries across Europe and North America.”¹⁶ As the Millennial generation has grown exponentially so has the desire for spirituality. Buddhism has risen to the occasion and provided what this group of young people are searching for. The establishment of new monasteries is not the only evidence of this generation influencing the growth of the spirituality movement. David Snyder gives ten “changes” or modifications to traditional Buddhist teachings that reflect a modern culture including: men and women being allowed to practice and study together in a monastic environment, the Dhamma may be taught in English and other local languages, an e-sangha can exist, women may teach men, and women being allowed to be ordained as bhikkhunis (nuns).¹⁷

The world, too, has changed as a new generation has emerged. Characteristics such as tolerance, gender equality, and the utilization of technology for communication are all examples of how Buddhist teachings have been applied the worldview of this generation. It is logical that Buddhism would be part of the spiritual path of emerging adults. Another prominent reason for Emerging Adults to include Buddhist teachings in their spiritual journey is because although individualistic in nature it also has implications for the greater good of humanity.

Buddhism is counter to most religions because the teachings are homocentric

¹⁶Bullit, John. “What is Theravada Buddhism?” Buddha Dharma Education Association and BuddhaNet. 2008. Accessed online May 5, 2017. <http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/buddhistworld/whats-thera.htm>.

¹⁷Snyder, David. “Modern Theravada Description.” December 2008. Accessed online May 5, 2017. <https://dhammawheel.com/viewtopic.php?t=32>.

(human centered) as opposed to theocentric (deity centered). Being homocentric, Buddhism is centered around self-exertion (personal effort) and self-realization (personal awareness). Focusing on an individual's "path" rather than relationships with others, Buddhism does not concern itself with intimate relationships.¹⁸ In fact, very little Buddhist doctrine addresses relationships at all. "Buddhism, therefore, does not concern itself greatly with intimate relationships. However, the goals of Buddhism are to increase the ability of the practitioner to live a peaceful, loving, and healthy life."¹⁹

Although Buddhism is practiced within the context of relationships, meaning is found within one's self. The Buddhist practices of living peacefully and harmoniously are two such examples. Todd Blatner of Goddard College writes about the Dhamma Path Through Relationship in his article by the same name:

Though often, and unfortunately, confused with spirituality, relationship as path is actually a subset of the human search for meaning. If relationship becomes an ultimate goal, or if it becomes entangled in romantic ideals of love where the partner becomes a means of salvation, then the meaning of "path" is lost. The Path denotes that there is an ideal that is beyond understanding, yet which underlies all that exists and all that is a part of human experience. The Path becomes distorted if relationship is seen as an end in itself, an avenue to heavenly bliss and realization of a greater sense of being. The Path is also distorted if it becomes affixed to the physical, earth-bound aspect of a particular person in a form of addiction and inability to let go.²⁰

Buddhism seems to contradict itself. On one hand, it teaches that relationships are irrelevant and nothing more than a "by-product" of peaceful living. On the other hand, there are teachers and practitioners, such as Susan Piver, that contextualize Buddhist

¹⁸Mahathera, Venerable Narmada. *The Buddha and His Teachings*. Taipei, Taiwan: The Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation, 1998.

¹⁹Blatner, Todd. "The Dhamma Path Through Relationship: Experience of Vipassana Meditators with Respect to Intimate Relationship." Goddard College, 2003. 12.

²⁰Ibid, 12.

teachings and its meaning for relationships. On the PBS.org website, Piver writes about Buddhism and relationships, “Well, as a student of Buddhism and one who writes about relationships, I can tell you that every time I’ve tried to contextualize a Buddhist teaching as a way of understanding love, it works.”²¹ She continues to discuss the application of Hinayana, Mahayana, and Vajrayana which are three specific contexts for living out Buddhist teachings. Piver is one of many modern Buddhist scholars that contradicts the ancient teaching of Buddha.

Christianity challenges individualistic thoughts and practices of homocentric Buddhism with theocentric truth. Buddhist practitioners strive to live peaceful and harmonious lives with others, yet, it appears to fail to recognize the importance of others in the equation of accomplishing these two goals. To live a peaceful and harmonious life there must be an object with which to live peaceful and harmonious. In fact, Buddhism acknowledges that The Path is lived out in relationships, but those relationships are not part of the end goal itself. Rather, the relationships are a “byproduct” of living out The Eightfold Path.²²

Kosho Uchiyama addresses the conflict between collectivism and individualism in his article “What is the Bodhisattva?” In addressing collectivism, Uchiyama states, “The life that flows through each of us and through everything around us is actually all connected. Who I am cannot be separated from all the things.”²³ He continues in his article reiterating that practicing Buddhism benefits bystanders, but those bystanders are not the

²¹Piver, Susan. “Buddhism and Relationships.” March 2010. Accessed online May 10, 2017. <http://www.pbs.org/thebuddha/blog/2010/mar/1/buddhism-and-relationships-susan-piver/>.

²²“The Meaning of Life in Buddhism.” ReligionFacts.com. March 2004. Accessed online May 12, 2017. <http://www.religionfacts.com/buddhism/meaning-life>.

²³Uchiyama, Kosho. “What is the Bodhisattva?” *Tricycle Magazine*. 2017. Accessed online May 4, 2017. <https://tricycle.org/magazine/what-bodhisattva/>.

primary motivation for the practices themselves. A religion that claims to be both collectivistic and individualistic simultaneously contradicts itself and the very definition of each cultural belief system.

Divergent from homocentric Buddhist teachings, theocentric Christianity finds relationships to be the foundation and context of many of its beliefs at the center of which is a relational God. Christianity asserts that there is a God existing in relationship with Himself in three distinct persons. Romans 3:23 contends that all humanity is sinful and not able to attain the glory of God without a perfect substitutionary sacrifice, which is found through relationship with Jesus Christ.

Contrary to Christianity, Buddhists believe that nirvana is the highest state of being. However, without relationships within which to live Buddhist practices, and measure progress towards nirvana, a Buddhist may never know if they have truly reached that goal. Success becomes merely subjective. Four of the eight principles of the Eightfold Path²⁴ requires relationships to measure objective success towards nirvana.

Relationships are critical to all aspects of human life and as such cannot be denied that significance. Relationships must be viewed considering the context of their origin: a triune God that exists in relationship as three distinct persons all having one essence, in whose image humanity has been created. Present day Christian theologian and apologist Norman Geisler defines the word trinity this manner, “. . . God is a Trinity: He is plurality with unity. God has plurality of persons and a unity of essence; God is three persons in one nature. That is only one ‘What’ (essence) in God, but there are three ‘Whos’ in that one What.”²⁵ Wayne Grudem supports Geisler’s writings and states, “God eternally exists

²⁴Shouler, Kenneth. *The Everything World’s Religions Book, 2nd Ed.* Avon, MA: Adams Media, 2010. 62-65.

²⁵Geisler, Norman L. *Systematic Theology in One Volume.* Minneapolis, MN. Bethany House,

as three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and each person is fully God, and there is only one God.”²⁶ Evidence for God’s triune existence is found in various places throughout scripture. One such instance is found in Luke 3:21-22: “. . . all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, ‘You are my Beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.’” God appears simultaneously as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. All are present as one God, each one fully God in and of themselves, yet distinct in individual appearance.

According to InterVarsity Press commentary of Jesus’ baptism, the very words spoken from heaven, “This is My Beloved Son,” indicates there is a relationship between a father and son. When God said, “whom I love” it was indicative of the quality of the relationship between that same father and the son. The Holy Spirit is also present as Jesus is praying while coming out of the water and the voice from heaven is heard.²⁷

Bible Hub, an online Bible study tool, shows the function of each person as they appeared at the baptism: Divine reconciliation is assured in the manifestation of the Son of God; Divine renewal is assured in the manifestation of the Holy Spirit; and Divine restoration is assured by the testimony of the Father. Each person in the Trinity had a distinct role, all were God, and all were present simultaneously.²⁸

In Genesis 1:1-2, God the Father and the Holy Spirit are seen appearing

2011. 540.

²⁶Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994. 223-240.

²⁷IVP New Testament Commentary: Luke. Accessed May 15, 2017.
<https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/commentaries/IVP-NT/Luke/Jesus-One-Who-Comes>.

²⁸Commentary on the Baptism of Jesus. Accessed online May 10, 2017.
<http://biblehub.com/commentaries/luke/3-21.htm>.

simultaneously. “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth... And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.” John, one of the Gospel writers, enlightens his readers to the presence of another at the beginning of the world. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made,” (John 1:1-4). John then proceeds to tell his readers exactly who this “Word” was just a few verses later in John 1:14: “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.” Jesus is the Word that was present with God the Father and the Holy Spirit at the beginning of the world.

Rodney Whitacre’s commentary of the Gospel of John highlights the importance of the relationship between the three persons of the Trinity:

If we want to understand who Jesus is, John says, we must begin with the relationship shared between the Father and the Son ‘before the world began’. . . This relationship is the central revelation of this Gospel and the key to understanding all that Jesus says and does. The first verse is very carefully constructed to refer to the personal distinctness yet the essential oneness of the Word with God. To be *with* God means the Word is distinct from him. The word *with (pros)* in a context like this is used to indicate personal relationship, not mere proximity... But he also *was* God; that is, there is an identity of being between them. These two truths seem impossible to reconcile logically, and yet both must be held with equal firmness.²⁹

The entire message of the Gospel is dependent on understanding the connections within the Trinity.

To get a complete picture of God, it is important to consider all three persons of God’s being. By excluding the New Testament from the canon of Scripture, Judaism fails to present a complete picture and understanding of God’s entire being. Judaism recognizes

²⁹Whitacre, Rodney. *IVP New Testament Commentary*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007.

the 39 books of the Old Testament as its source for information about the person and character of God.³⁰ However, this is an incomplete revelation of God. The Old Testament contains only part of the story of restoration and redemption of humanity.

The New Testament provides the clarity needed to accurately interpret the Old Testament. Kay Arthur, pioneer of the inductive study method of Bible study, writes about the importance of allowing Scripture to interpret Scripture:

The Bible is one revelation without contradiction. Therefore, when studying any particular book of the Bible, ultimately that book must be evaluated in the light of the entire Bible. Because context rules in interpretation, both the immediate context of the chapter and book must be considered, as well as the remote context of the whole Bible. . . . To be sure that you accurately handle His Word, you need to study all of the places in the Bible where a subject is taught. A cross-reference is a reference to another Scripture that supports, illuminates, or amplifies the Scripture you are studying.³¹

For example, in Mark 12:13-34 Jesus quotes the first two verses of the Sh'ma as the first and foremost commandment. Previously noted in John 1:1-4 and John 1:14, both passages provide clarity to the Genesis narrative. Throughout the Gospels, the reader witnesses Jesus fulfilling the less clear Old testament prophecies, explaining them with clarity, illuminating the Kingdom of God, and thereby exercising the authority given to Him by God the Father. Jesus spent much of His ministry helping the Jewish people make connections between the Old and New Testament. Without reading and studying the entire Bible there is little clarity and often misinterpretations, as is the case with Judaism.

The complete canon of Scripture, the complete 66 books of the Bible, provides sufficient evidence of God's existence as three distinct persons, relationally connected to one another, before the foundation of the world. Returning to Genesis and the creation of

³⁰Rich, Tracey R. "Judaism 101: Shema." 2011. Accessed online April 26, 2017. <http://www.jewfaq.org/shemaref.htm>.

³¹ Arthur, Kay. *How to Study Your Bible*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1994. 73.

the world, God is seen working and communicating within the relationship of the three distinct persons of His being. God referred to Himself with the plural pronouns “us” and “our” at the creation of humans in Genesis 1:26-28:

Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’

Not only does the text reinforce that God exists in relationship as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but also humanity was created in that same relational image of God.

Humanity was designed for relationship because God Himself exists in relationship. God created humanity to be in relationship with Him.

God created man *Imago Dei*, in the image of God, a very personal act of love. To be “in the image of” implies being a close likeness of something else. In this case, humans are a close likeness of God. According to Jewish teaching,

Our tradition reflects the view that humans are created in the image of God. Many interpretations have proffered to explain this notion, including that humans have a capacity for morality and gratitude, unlike other animals, that they have an insight

into the world that is unlike other species and closer to God’s, and that they have a sense of self and relationship which is God-like.³²

Although denying the Trinitarian view of God, Judaism recognizes the importance of relationships within Jewish communities. Jewish values such as Ahava (love), B’tzelem Elohim (being made in the image of God), Hesed (covenanted caring), Kehila

³²Scheinerman, Amy. “How Does Judaism View the Relationship Between People and God?” 2017. Accessed March 1, 2017. <http://www.reformjudaism.org/practice/ask-rabbi/how-does-judaism-view-relationship-between-people-and-god>.

(commitment to community), Inclusion (welcoming all), and P’ru ur’vu (be fruitful and multiply) all require others to be lived out.³³ In fact, removing relationships would dismantle the entire foundation of religion and faith for Judaism. Without relationships and community, there wouldn’t be a covenant people called Israel.

Judaism contends that humanity is B’tzelem Elohim (made in the image of God) in certain aspects, not to include our physical bodies. In fact, Judaism rejects anthropomorphic language which describes God as having a physical body and other human attributes. It is this belief that also prevents Judaism from accepting that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, that He came to earth, and lived a life in a human body. Jesus was fully human and fully God at the same time. This supernatural phenomenon is known as the hypostatic union of Christ. Only someone with this specific composure could be a mediator between God and humanity.³⁴

This hypostatic union of Christ is defined and discussed in Dave Mathis’ article, “What is the Hypostatic Union of Christ?”:

Our English adjective *hypostatic* comes from the Greek word *hypostasis*. The word only appears four times in the New Testament – maybe the most memorably in Hebrews 1:3, where Jesus is said to be ‘the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his *nature*. Here the author of Hebrews uses the word in reference to the oneness of God. Both the father and the son are of the same “nature.” Jesus is the exact imprint of his [God’s] *nature*.³⁵

The significance of this is because of this joining of humanity and deity, God can connect in relationship with humanity and, “. . .an un-incarnate deity does not connect with us in

³³Teutsch, David A. “Attitudes, Beliefs and Values Shaping Jewish Practice,” (an excerpt from *A Guide to Jewish Practice, Vol. I*. Center for Jewish Ethics, 2000), 2003. Accessed May 26, 2017. http://www.rrc.edu/sites/default/files/uploaded_images/news_documents/TEUTSCH_VALUES%20LIST.PDF.

³⁴Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994. 553.

³⁵Mathis, Dave. “What is the Hypostatic Union?” December 2007. Accessed May 31, 2017. <http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/what-is-the-hypostatic-union>.

the same way as a God who became human.”³⁶

Jewish belief accepts that humanity is like God in moral, spiritual, and mental aspects. Judaism agrees with Christianity on the following points: (1) moral aspects, having an internal sense of right and wrong and of moral accountability; (2) spiritual aspects, having an immaterial spirit and the ability to act in the spiritual realm by praying, praising, and even hearing God speak; and (3) in mental, such as thinking, reasoning, learning, being capable of emotional responses, and having an awareness of the future.³⁷ If humanity is like God in all of these ways, it is logical to conclude that humanity is like God in relational aspects too.

The realization of being created in the image of God impacts one’s personal sense of worth and dignity. It should also determine one’s responsibility to care for and love all of humanity as fellow image bearers. Russell M. Grigg states, “Man’s life is thus not the result of spontaneous reorganization of molecules within the body, nor is it derived by evolution from any animal, but it is a direct gift from God.”³⁸ Grigg continues stating, “When God created man in His own image, He purposed that humankind (both men and women) would resemble God in certain way, and share certain divine prerogatives.”³⁹ Being created in the image of God sets humanity apart from the entire rest of creation, and should be treated with dignity and respect. Grudem reinforces this premise when he states, “Every human being, no matter how much the image of God is marred by sin, or illness,

³⁶Mathis, Dave. “What is the Hypostatic Union?” December 2007. Accessed May 31, 2017. <http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/what-is-the-hypostatic-union>.

³⁷Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994. 446-447.

³⁸Grigg, Russell M. “Made in the Image of God.” Creation Ministries International. March 2016. Accessed May 17, 2017. <http://creation.com/made-in-the-image-of-god>.

³⁹Ibid.

or weakness, or age, or any other disability, still has the status of being in God's image and therefore must be treated with the dignity and respect that is due to God's image-bearer."⁴⁰ Humanity was created in the image of God and thus set apart from all of creation. God is relational by nature. Thus, humans are relational by design since their creation.

Relationships are established in love. Love is one of the moral attributes of God, in whose image humanity has been created. The complete concept of love involves both the subjective element in combination with the objective element, or the what or whom is being loved. Jesus taught about Believers who are called to love in Matthew 22:36-39:

‘Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?’ And he said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’

The love referred to here is “agape” love. As defined by Precept Austin,

Agape love is unconditional, sacrificial love and Biblically refers to the love that God is, that shows God, and that God gives as a manifestation of His Spirit's bearing fruit in the heart of a yielded saint. Biblical agape love is love of choice, of serving with humility, the highest kind of love, the noblest kind of devotion, the love of the will (intentional, a conscious choice), and not motivated by superficial appearance, emotional attraction, or sentimental relationship."⁴¹

Carly Bockhold provides a discourse in what she believes is the underlying basis for relationships: “One single trait is so important in every relationship on earth. According to dictionary.com, trust is defined as ‘a firm belief in the reliability, truth, ability, or strength of someone or something. When you trust someone, you give them your confidence, your

⁴⁰ Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994. 450

⁴¹ Precept Austin Admin. “Agape Word Study.” August 2016. Accessed May 20, 2017. <http://www.preceptaustin.org/love-agape>.

grace, your passion - You basically give them everything you have.”⁴² This is agape love. The Bible commands Christians to love God and others, as love is the basis for all relationships. Humanity was indeed created for relationships with God and others. It is within the context of relational design that Christians are called to love others and to share with them the Gospel story.

God Sends Believers into the World to Share the Gospel

Many religions are missionary faiths. However, in society today, it is becoming increasingly less common for people of faith in Jesus Christ to take steps to share their faith with others. This begs the question, “Why not?” Perhaps this is due to tolerance movements in which people do not want to offend others by pressuring them to believe as they believe; or because they lack the knowledge and confidence to talk to others regarding their faith; or that peoples’ worldviews do not include missionary work. Whatever the case might be, evangelism appears to be on the decline across the nation. According to The Barna Group, “While the evangelistic practices of all other generations have either declined or remained static in part the past few years, Millennials are the only generation among whom evangelism is significantly on the rise. Their faith sharing practices have escalated from 56% in 2010 to 65% in 2013.”⁴³ This warrants a fresh look at Believers’ mission to revitalize evangelism efforts today. Much can be learned from observing the Millennial generation.

Much has been written about Christians being commissioned or sent to share the

⁴² Bockhold, Carly. “Trust: The underlying basis for relationships.” Wittenberg University, October 2015. Accessed April 10, 2017. <https://www.theodysseyonline.com/trust-underlying-basis-relationships>.

⁴³ Barna Group, The. “Research Releases in faith and Christianity: Is Evangelism Going Out of Style?”. December 2013. Accessed online January 17, 2017. <https://www.barna.com/research/is-evangelism-going-out-of-style/>.

gospel of Jesus Christ. Kim Hammond writes about the Believers' mission in *Sentness*:

Mission was understood as being derived from the very nature of God... Father, Son, and Holy Spirit sending the church into the world... a movement from God to the world; the church is viewed as an instrument for that mission... There is a church because there is a mission, not vice versa.⁴⁴

Matthew Lee Anderson comments on Leslie Newbiggin's "The Message of Mission," stating,

In discussions about the contemporary mission of the Church, it is often said that the Church ought to address itself to the real questions which people are asking. That is to misunderstand the mission of Jesus and the mission of the Church. The world's questions are not the questions that lead to life. What really needs to be said is that where the Church is faithful to the Lord, there the powers of the Kingdom are present, and the people begin to ask the questions to which the Gospel is the answer.⁴⁵

The mission of the Church is to bring the Kingdom of God to the world and thereby share the message of salvation through the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Believers are called to live on mission wherever they go.

However, few other religions embrace the idea of proselytizing. Neither Judaism (the root of Christianity) or Buddhism (one of the central contributors to individualistic and idealistic practices among the Emerging Adult population) prioritize sharing their religious beliefs with others. Two possible reasons Jews reject seeking converts is that from their perspective, "... Jews have never believed their religion is the only way to become close to God and be a moral person... Others have targeted Jews for conversion and they haven't liked it." Buddhists, on the other hand, believe in sharing their faith via

⁴⁴Hammond, Kim and Darren Crenshaw. *Sentness*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014. 11.

⁴⁵Anderson, Matthew Lee. "The Message of Mission: Leslie Newbiggin on the Mission of the Church." *Mere Orthodoxy*, April 2008. Accessed May 1, 2017. <https://mereorthodoxy.com/the-message-of-mission-leslie-newbiggin-on-the-mission-of-the-church/>.

‘missionaries,’ but not in the traditional ways one would think.⁴⁶

“In general, Jews do not try to convert non-Jews to Judaism. In fact, according to Halakhah (Jewish Law), rabbis are to make three vigorous attempts to dissuade a person who wants to convert to Judaism.”⁴⁷ When compared to Christianity, the conversion process is very long and complex:

The rabbinically mandated attempt to dissuade a convert is intended to make sure that the prospective convert is serious and willing to take on all this extra responsibility. Once a person has decided to convert, the proselyte must begin to learn Jewish religion, law and customs and begin to observe them. This teaching process generally takes at least one year, because the prospective convert must experience each of the Jewish holidays; however, the actual amount of study required will vary from person to person (a convert who was raised as a Jew might not need any further education, for example, while another person might need several years)...After the teaching is complete, the proselyte is brought before a Beit Din (rabbinical court) which examines the proselyte and determines whether he or she is ready to become a Jew. If the proselyte passes this oral examination, the rituals of conversion are performed. If the convert is male, he is circumcised (or, if he was already circumcised, a pinprick of blood is drawn for a symbolic circumcision). Both male and female converts are immersed in the mikvah (a ritual bath used for spiritual purification). The convert is given a Jewish name and is then introduced into the Jewish community.⁴⁸

Followers of Judaism do not “share their faith” to promote their religious beliefs. Rather, the responsibility falls on the individual who seeks conversion to: (1) pursue the help of a rabbi to learn all there is to know about Judaism; (2) become part of a Jewish community; and, (3) observe a year’s worth of Jewish holidays before being allowed to go before the rabbinical court. Again, this is a lengthy process that is individually driven and corporately approved.

Conversion to Buddhism, like Judaism, is primarily individually initiated and

⁴⁶Rich, Tracey R. “Judaism 101: Jewish Attitudes Towards Non-Jews.” 2011. Accessed online May 5, 2017. <http://www.jewfaq.org/gentiles.htm>.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Wildstein, Jeffrey. *Judaism*. New York, NY: Penguin Random House, LLC., 2015.

pursued. However, this was not the original design for Buddhism. According to early Buddhist teachings,

After Buddha accepted his first disciples, he said to them: ‘Go forth for the good of many, out of compassion for the world, for the welfare, the good and the happiness of gods and humans. Let no two of you go in the same direction. Teach the Dhamma which is beautiful in the beginning, beautiful in the middle and beautiful in the end. Explain both the letter and the spirit of the holy life, completely fulfilled and perfectly pure.’⁴⁹

Buddhist missionaries were sent not to convert others to Buddhism, but rather to make “Buddhists better Buddhists.”⁵⁰ Buddhist missionaries do not have the primary goal of converting others to their faith. Rather, they would view that as “stealing” from others, which is forbidden in the Eightfold Path. However, much time is spent teaching the

Dhamma with kindness, not focusing on personal gain, and not to the detriment of self or others.⁵¹

In the West, Buddhism has come with thousands of immigrants. “Beginning in the 19th century, Buddhism was introduced into the United States and other Western countries by large numbers of immigrants, first from China and Japan but more recently from other countries, especially countries of Southeast Asia.”⁵² With the arrival of the Millennial generation and subsequently the Emerging Adult, many young people began rejecting traditional religion. They have adopted a sense of being spiritual without being religious.

The phrase ‘spiritual but not religious’ has become widely used in recent years by

⁴⁹Doniger, Wendy. *Merriam-Webster’s Encyclopedia of World Religions*. Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 1999.

⁵⁰Cornille, Catherine. *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Inter-Religion Dialogue*. Chinchester, West Suffix, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013.

⁵¹Cornille, Catherine. *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Inter-Religion Dialogue*. Chinchester, West Suffix, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013.

⁵²Shouler, Kenneth A. *The Everything World’s Religion Book*. Avon, MA: Adams Media, 2010.

some Americans who are trying to describe their religious identity. Americans have become less religious in recent years by standards measures such as how important they say religion is to them and their frequency of [attendance] of religious service and prayer. But at the same time, the share of people across a wide variety of religious identities who say they often feel a deep sense of spiritual peace and well-being as well as a deep sense of wonder about the universe has risen.⁵³

Many Emerging Adults create a personalized, mixed worldview by combining teaching concepts from various religions that suit their personal convictions. Buddhism, being individualistic and idealistic, fits with many Emerging Adults' worldviews.

For the Emerging Adult, being spiritual is a very personal experience. The Eightfold Path provides structure for them to embrace, while leaving room for personal interpretation and expression. In fact, many Emerging Adults would not refer to themselves as Buddhist. However, when asked about specific spiritual beliefs, many beliefs mirror the teachings of Buddhism. Emerging Adults live in a day and age where information is abundant. Emerging Adults can research any topic they wish and create their own worldviews based on personal preferences.

Both Judaism and Buddhism seem to assume that individuals can and will seek God or a higher state of being, on their own accord. Both religions also contend that the religion will choose the individual. This is contrary to the teachings contained in the Bible in Rom. 3:9-12:

What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, as it is written: 'None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.'

Humans do not seek God on their own accord. According to Barnes' Notes on the Bible commentary, "'To understand' is used in the sense of being wise; or of having such a state

⁵³Masci, David and Michael Lipka. "Americans May Be Getting Less Religious, But Feelings of Spirituality are on the Rise." Pew Research Center, January 2016. Accessed May 18, 2017. <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/01/21/americans-spirituality/>.

of moral feeling as to dispose them to serve and obey God,” and, “‘To seek after God’- That endeavor to know and do his will, and to be acquainted with his character. A disposition not to seek after God, that is, to neglect and forget him, is one of the most decided proofs of depravity.”⁵⁴

Because of general revelation (God revealing Himself to the world through nature)⁵⁵ humans have an awareness of a void that can only be filled by God. Yet, it appears humans attempt to fill it with a variety of other things independent of a relationship with God (Rom. 1:20-23):

For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.⁵⁶

If humans are to interpret nature rightly they must have the Bible to do so. Otherwise, interpreting the messages found in nature is then left to the human imagination, which results in a feeble attempt to explain the spiritual mysteries of God through a variety of religious philosophies.

God has also given special revelation (God revealing Himself through the Scriptures).⁵⁷ Believers can understand this kind of revelation because of the Holy Spirit living within them. However, since individuals do not seek God on their own, it is the responsibility of all Christians share the message of the Gospel. In doing so, they are

⁵⁴Barnes Notes on the Bible. “Commentary on Roman 3.” Accessed May 10, 2017. <http://biblehub.com/romans/3-9.htm>.

⁵⁵Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994, 122-123.

⁵⁶Romans 1:20-23

⁵⁷Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994, 122-123.

making God's special revelation from scripture audible for others to hear. This special revelation allows humanity the ability to rightly interpret the world around them. Romans 10:14 states, "How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?" Gill's Exposition of the Bible provides commentary on this passage: "There is no faith in Christ without hearing of Him. . . moreover, this is to be the usual way and means of believing; for though God does and sometimes does work by other means, and even without any, yet his usual way and method is, to bring men to faith and repentance by the hearing of the word."⁵⁸ Christians become the vocal chords of God, proclaiming the message of salvation found in Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God.

Christians are called to participate in God's redemptive mission for humanity by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ. God draws people to Himself through "effective calling." Wayne Grudem defines effective calling in this manner: "Effective calling is an act of God the Father, speaking through the human proclamation of the gospel, in which he summons people to himself in such a way that they respond in saving faith... Kind of a summons from the king of the universe."⁵⁹ God uses His people to carry His message and draw people into relationship with Himself.

Unlike Judaism, Christianity is a missionary faith. "Mission is not an activity of the church but an attribute of God. God is missionary God, Jesus is a missionary Messiah, and the Spirit is a missionary Spirit. Missions is a family business."⁶⁰ Just as love is an

⁵⁸Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible." Commentary Rom. 10:14." Accessed May 4, 2017. <http://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/romans-10-14.html>.

⁵⁹Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994. 693.

⁶⁰Sweet, Leonard. *So Beautiful*. Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2009. 55.

attribute of God, so is being missional. God is a sending God. He sent His Son Jesus to proclaim the kingdom of God to a lost people.

1 John 4:14 reads, “And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.” Referring to His own “sentness” in John 17:18, Jesus prays, “As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.” Jesus acknowledged that He was sent by the Father and it was His responsibility to send His followers out into the world to continue His mission. He reiterates His own sentness a few chapters later in John 20:21 before He ascends into heaven, “Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.’”

Returning to Leslie Newbiggin’s words, quoted by Matthew Lee Anderson, the primary reason people do not embrace the same sentness that Jesus did is because, “The problem with late 20th Century evangelicalism is not that it ceased to be missional. Rather, it is that it ceased to be marked by a deep desire and love for the person of Jesus Christ. If they made this their intent and focus, they could be nothing but missional in their approach to the Gospel.”⁶¹ The Church must learn how to fall in love again with Jesus Christ.

Early on in His earthly ministry, Jesus sends out His twelve disciples. Luke 9:1-2 records the following:

And he called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. And he said to them, ‘Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money; and do not have two tunics. And whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart. And wherever they do not receive you, when you leave that town shake off the dust from your feet as a testimony against them.’ And they departed and went through the villages, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.

⁶¹Anderson, Matthew Lee. “The Message of Mission: Leslie Newbiggin on the Mission of the Church.” Mere Orthodoxy, April 2008. Accessed May 1, 2017. <https://mereorthodoxy.com/the-message-of-mission-leslie-newbiggin-on-the-mission-of-the-church/>.

As His ministry grew, Jesus sent out 72 of his followers. Again, Luke 10:1-12 records this sending of disciples which mirrors the first:

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to go. And he said to them, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. Go your way; behold, I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. Carry no moneybag, no knapsack, no sandals, and greet no one on the road. Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house!' And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him. But if not, it will return to you. And remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for the laborer deserves his wages. Do not go from house to house. Whenever you enter a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you. Heal the sick in it and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' But whenever you enter a town and they do not receive you, go into its streets and say, 'Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near.' I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town.

Jesus sent His followers to carry forth the ministry started by His Father, God. They were sent to proclaim the Kingdom of God, just as He had been sent to do. Barnes' Notes on the Bible comments on this passage, stating, "This is the design and the extent of the commission of the ministers of the Lord Jesus. He is their model; and they will be successful only as they study his character and imitate his example."⁶² It is only logical that Jesus would send His disciples, and Christians alike, since He himself was sent from the Father.

Twice in John's Gospel Jesus referred to sending out His disciples. The first instance, found in John 17:15-18, was while He was praying to God the Father, "I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world." The second,

⁶²Barnes' Notes on the Bible. "Commentary on Luke 10:1-12." Accessed May 10, 2017. <http://www.sacred-texts.com/bib/cmt/barnes/luk010.htm>.

found in Luke 20:21-22, was He addressed His disciples before His ascension, “Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.’”

Christian believers are sent into the world to participate in *Missio Dei*, the mission of God. The question now becomes, “What are Believers sent to do?” Christians are sent to love their neighbors and herald the Gospel message to the world around them. This message is one of love and is a call to enter into intentional relationships.

According to the gospel of Mark 16:15, Jesus sends his followers out into the entire world with the following commission: “And he said to them, ‘Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.’” According to Barnes’ Notes on the Bible, “preach” means to make known or to offer; “to every creature” means to all humanity without discretion.⁶³ Matthew records Jesus’ instructions in even more detail. Matthew 28:19-20 states, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

The mission is clear. Christians are sent to go into the world and proclaim that the Kingdom of God has come. Leonard Sweet expressed this truth beautifully when he said, “As you are being you, as you are being present to your world, make disciples... The center of the biblical construction is not the ‘go’ but ‘make disciples’. In short, ‘make disciples...as you are being present to wherever you are.’”⁶⁴ Christians are commanded to make disciples with whomever they find themselves in contact with, just as Jesus made disciples of those He encountered where He had been sent. Jesus did just that by engaging

⁶³Barnes’ Notes on the Bible. “Commentary on Mark 16:15.” Accessed May 10, 2017. <https://biblehub.com/mark/16-15.htm>.

⁶⁴Sweet, Leonard. *So Beautiful*. Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2009. 70.

people where they were in life.

God Engages People Where They Are in Life

When Jesus commanded His disciples to “go and make disciples,” He was not only giving them the opportunity to participate in Missio Dei - the mission of God - but He was also telling them to take the kingdom of God along with them everywhere they went.

Mission is all that God is doing in the world to bring the world back into line with His dream for it. The church’s privilege is that God invites us to cooperate. God sends people to cooperate with what God wants to do in the world. Missio Dei is the basis for our sentness and the path beyond consumerism.⁶⁵

Yet, Missio Dei goes beyond just what God is doing in the world and invites each Christian to become involved in the lives of individuals whom He draws to Himself, living incarnate lives. “Incarnation means that God enables divinity to embody humanity.”⁶⁶ Christians are the embodiment of God’s Spirit, through whom God chooses to work in the lives of others. Not only does God seek to engage the world in general, He seeks to do so on an individual level by meeting people where they are.

Churches today have missed this critical incarnational piece of Missio Dei. Most church models are attractional in how corporate worship is conducted. The attractional church creates an entertaining environment, rich in multisensory media, and relies on emotional experiences to draw people to God. The use of light shows, elaborate visual aids, high-energy preaching, creative programming, and the like becomes a “polished performance” each week. Most of the church resources, particularly money and people,

⁶⁵Hammond, Kim and Darren Cronshaw. *Sentness*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014. 49.

⁶⁶Pocock, Michael, Gailyn Van Rheenen, and Dougleas McConnell. *The Changing Face of World Missions: Engaging Contemporary Issues and Trends*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academics, 2005.

are collected and directed towards putting on this “production.” The message conveyed to church goers is “come and see what we have to offer,” as though they are “selling” Jesus to the crowds. However, the church fails to meet people where they are in life. “Pastors feel pressured to become providers of religious goods and services- a decidedly consumer-driven approach to ministry- rather than helping people become more focused on the mission of God in the world.”⁶⁷ As a result, people fail to connect with God and His people and their deepest spiritual needs go unmet.

Churches today are beginning to move away from the “come and see” attractional model and replacing it with the “go and be” missional model. The Church today is called to “go” into the world and “be” the kingdom of God to all people by living incarnate lives. This model closely mirrors Jesus’ model for engaging the people around Him. Jesus went from town to town, met people where they were in life, and brought them the message of the Kingdom of God. A missional minded church actively seeks to engage people outside its traditional walls. This seems somewhat counter-cultural today. How much more so this would have been the case in Jesus’ day when He met people amid their brokenness? Jesus lived each day with intentionality, engaging those around Him, which was foreign to His Jewish culture. “Jesus did not come into the world and live life on a mountaintop isolated from human suffering. He walked among us, ate with us, and shared in our humanity. He did not heal lepers from a distance but touched them into wholeness.”⁶⁸ Jesus lived an incarnate life, submerged in humanity, rather than one void of human experience. It is this alone that sets Christianity apart from all other religions.

⁶⁷Hammond, Kim and Darren Cronshaw. *Sentness*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014. 30.

⁶⁸McManus, Erwin Raphael. “Uprising a Revolution of the Soul.” Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2003. 111.

Judaism does not traditionally seek to engage people where they are in life. Instead, traditional Judaism believes that a twofold process will take place for someone to convert to Judaism. First, the person will choose Judaism. Second, Judaism will choose them. As previously noted, the individual wishing to convert must first change nearly everything about their life before being considered for acceptance into a program of study with a Rabbi. In a sense, the process demonstrates that people must prove themselves serious about becoming Jewish. Making the necessary changes to one's lifestyle and demonstrating a willingness to adhere to the Jewish way of life provides proof of a person's desire to engage with God by becoming Jewish.⁶⁹

With that said, modern Judaism is beginning to recognize the need to engage with people where they are in life: "It has become a mantra in the 21st Century Jewish communal world that if we want to succeed in engaging the next generation we need to work at meeting them where they are, both literally and figuratively."⁷⁰ However, after further research, it becomes apparent that the goal of engaging people where they are is merely an attempt to place traditional teachings into the context of today's world. Jews are not engaging people outside of their religious community and they are not meeting people where they are. They are merely adapting their teachings to modern formats.

Judaism is failing to meet people where they are by asking them to make changes to prove their sincerity for conversion. This concept is quite opposite to God pursuit of people. "Meeting people where they are" is demonstrated by accepting them with their faults, serving them, and sharing the love of God in a relevant way within the individual's

⁶⁹Wildstein, Jeffrey. "Judaism." New York, NY: Penguin - Random House, LLC., 2015.

⁷⁰ Tecktiel, Rabbi Bradley. "Meeting People Where They Are." Midbar Kodesh Temple, 2017. Accessed May 27, 2017. <http://www.midbarkodesh.org/single-post/2017/02/02/Meeting-People-Where-They-Are>.

context. “Meeting people where they are” allows people to be recognized as worthy of dignity and respect regardless of life choices. It also allows them to enter the Kingdom of God “just as they are,” without going through all the preliminary efforts to clean up the messiness of life before doing so.

Living incarnate lives is the solution for Christians to meeting people where they are. In their book, *The Emotionally Healthy Church*, Peter Scazzero and Warren Bird outline the three dynamics of incarnational life. These dynamics include: (1) Entering another’s world, or worldview, with a valiant attempt to understand their perspective and suspend judgement; (2) Holding onto oneself by being able to enter the world of another but not losing one’s identity in Christ; and (3) Hanging between two worlds by being an incarnational presence of the Kingdom of God within the context of the world itself. “The incarnation calls us out of our literal, physical comfort zones to meet people where they are.”⁷¹

The Emerging Adult generation of today seems to understand this concept of meeting people where they are. Emerging Adults tend to meet people from a platform of social justice and vague spirituality rather than from a theocentric missional one. Young people today recognize the depravity of others and attempt to fill those needs. Perhaps, this comes from the mixed worldview many of the Emerging Adults hold, that often includes the following pieces of the Eightfold Path of Buddhism: (1) right speech (in communicating with others); (2) right conduct (both individually and towards others in society); (3) right mind/ attitude (towards both self and others); and (4) right mindfulness (both internally and externally, noticing others as they are in each moment).⁷² Perhaps,

⁷¹Scazzero, Peter and Warren Bird. *The Emotionally Healthy Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003. 187-199.

⁷²Shouler, Kenneth. *The Everything World’s Religions Book, 2nd Ed.* Avon, MA: Adams Media,

helping others temporarily fills the void in the Emerging Adult's life that was meant to be filled by God. Regardless, Emerging Adults are tolerant and accepting of lifestyles different from their own, and they are also intentional about engaging others. However, they lack a message and purpose behind meeting people where they are in life. It is this lack of message that gives these moments temporary value, rather than lasting fulfillment.⁷³

Buddhism does not attempt to meet people where they are. However, there is confusion in this area because Buddhism is practiced individually but within the context of relationships. Other people are impacted because of a person living out the principles of the Eightfold Path. Buddhists do not actively seek to engage intentionally others where they are; but by adhering to the teachings of the Eightfold Path, they inadvertently end up doing so. Rather than engaging in those relationships, the primary purpose to live life in such a way that it does not negatively impact others along life's path. One element that Buddhism lacks, due to its individualistic nature, is the intentionality of engaging others and becoming involved in their life in some way. Buddhism waits for people to seek it.

Christianity handles engaging others differently than Buddhism and Judaism. Christianity is incarnational, and this becomes contextualized by design. God provided the ultimate example of contextualization when He penned the Bible through His chosen individuals:

The incarnational nature of God is evident in the Scriptures themselves, which stand as a showcase of God's eagerness to speak our language in all its peculiarities and particularities. Matthew reached out to the Jewish mind. Mark reached out to the Gentile mind. John wrote Greek such that a child could

2010. 63-63.

⁷³Arnett, Jeffrey J. *Oxford Handbook of Emerging Adulthood*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2015. 488.

understand. Hebrews (and the first four verses of Luke) contains the Greek only a literary master could dream of writing. The divine design is to meet us where we are.”⁷⁴

Christian cross-cultural missionaries attempt to learn the language, culture, and customs of the people they intend to serve and share their message with. God, too, communicates with humanity in understandable language and concepts, both in the Bible and in today’s world. Darrell L. Whiteman addresses the importance of contextualization, by means of incarnation, with regards to the message of the Gospel. He asserts that the early church struggled within a variety of cultural contexts as the Gospel was preached and the church began to spread.

Contextualization captures in method and perspective the challenge of relating the Gospel to culture. In this sense the concern of contextualization is ancient - going back to the early church as it struggled to break loose from its Jewish cultural trappings and enter the Greco-Roman world of the Gentiles... Unless we present the Gospel locally in ways that connect to people’s language, culture, and worldview, we will fall in our efforts at world evangelism.⁷⁵

Whiteman continues:

Non-contextualized Christianity seldom engages people at the level of their deepest needs . . . we must take our cues from the incarnation [of Jesus Christ]. In the same way that Jesus emptied himself and dwelt among us, we must be willing to do likewise as we enter another culture with the Gospel. The incarnation is our model for contextualization, for as J.D. Gordon once said, ‘Jesus is God spelled out in a language human beings can understand’ - I would add, ‘in every culture, in every context.’⁷⁶

Jesus modeled contextualization was when He took on flesh and became human as He entered this culture. In John 1:14, John expresses the incarnate nature of Jesus, “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory of the

⁷⁴Sweet, Leonard. *So Beautiful*. Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2009. 153.

⁷⁵Whiteman, Darrell L. “Contextualization: The Theory, the Gap and the Challenge.” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*; Jan 1997, Vol. 21, Issue 1. 2.

⁷⁶*Ibid*, 2.

Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.” Barnes’ Notes on the Bible expands on the Word becoming flesh, “. . .when John says he ‘tabernacled’ [or dwelt] with them, he means that He was with them as a friend and as one of the family, so that they had full opportunity of becoming familiarly acquainted with him, and could not be mistaken in supposing that ‘He was really [just] a man.’”⁷⁷ Paul echoes this truth in his letter to the Philippians 2:5-8:

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Jesus was born in the likeness of man. In exploring the Greek meaning of likeness, one discovers that the word refers to being made “like unto people by assuming such a body as theirs.”⁷⁸ As a result, Jesus can meet people in their suffering and in the place of greatest need. In doing so, He gives meaning and authenticity to each person’s story of faith.

With many of his interactions, Jesus was found in the least likely of places. He ate with sinners, prostitutes and tax collectors. He defended those whom society had cast aside. He touched those considered “unclean.” Knowing this, it is not surprising that Jesus finds Himself in Samaria, where Jews chose to avoid travel, talking to a woman who was alone, extending the kingdom of God. Jesus met this woman at the well at the very place of her shame, the social hub of the watering well. Jesus was willing to cross cultural lines for this woman and meet her where she was in life rather than waiting for her to find Him.⁷⁹

⁷⁷Barnes’ Notes on the Bible. “Commentary on John 1.” Accessed May 13, 2017. <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/barnes/john/1.htm>.

⁷⁸Ibid.

⁷⁹John 4:4-30.

Liz Curtis Higgs, author of *Bad Girls of the Bible*, illuminates this story of the woman at the well: “This is a Savior who says, ‘I’ve been there. I get it. I’m with you.’ He understands exhaustion, stress, muscle aches. He knows what it means to feel weary, thirsty, hungry.” She continues, “Despite her doubts, Jesus didn’t give up on the Samaritan woman. Didn’t walk away or call her foolish. Didn’t stop seeking to meet her deepest need.” Higgs closes her commentary with this thought, “Though she is often called ‘the Samaritan Woman,’ I think the ‘woman at the well’ suits her perfectly. Not only did Jesus meet her at a well, he also offered her a ‘well of water’.”⁸⁰ Jesus met the woman where she was, both physically and spiritually. He waited patiently for her and offered to meet her deepest need.

In John 23:39-43, Jesus meets the dying thief on the cross amid of suffering, recognized and met his greatest spiritual need, and extended the kingdom of God. The thief did not have a formal means of conversion, but Jesus met him in the place of his greatest need. He was a “crucified man trusting in a crucified Christ.”⁸¹ In both cases, Jesus intentionally went to the physical location of each person, entered their sufferings, and extended His message of hope. Leonard Sweet reflects on the incarnational nature of Christ throughout his book, *So Beautiful*:

It is impossible to talk about engaging the lives of others without relationships. Jesus was the ultimate example of incarnation when he came to earth, lived as we lived, experienced life as humanity experiences it, and ultimately met us where we were. God did not expect humanity to meet Him on His turf or in His way. Rather, God came to earth, took on flesh, becoming human in every way but without sin. By doing this, He meet each person where they are as humans. No other religion

⁸⁰Higgs, Liz Curtis. *Bad Girls of the Bible*. Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook Press, 1999. 34.

⁸¹Spurgeon, C.H. “The Dying Thief in a New Light,” (sermon, Metropolitan Tabernacle, Newington, CT, August 23, 1885). Accessed online February 4, 2017. <http://www.spurgeongems.org/vols31-33/chs1881.pdf>.

has a story where God meets humanity where they are in order to restore them to relationship. Christianity is completely unique in this aspect. Jesus is the example of how to engage others. Jesus did not wait for people to come to Him. Rather, He sought them out in the messes of everyday life.⁸²

Relationships are the essential medium for meeting the deepest spiritual needs any of human being. Neither Buddhism or Judaism utilize contextualization when communicating their respective spiritual messages. They both fail to meet people where they are in life and bring a message of hope through the cultural contexts of others. Rather, they both call people out of their current lifestyles and cultures and require them to engage in a foreign culture.

Engaging people where they are sets Christianity apart from other religions. Christians are called to meet people within their individual contexts, live incarnate lives that demonstrate the kingdom of heaven, and share a contextualized message of salvation found in Jesus Christ. No other religion has a God that is relational by nature, missional by design, and incarnational by choice. Christians must also become relational, missional, and incarnational to reach a lost world.

⁸²Sweet, Leonard. *So Beautiful*. Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2009. 132.

CHAPTER 4

THEORETICAL PRESUPPOSITIONS

Understanding the Emerging Adult Developmental Stage is Essential for Outreach Leaders

One of the most essential elements of the Gospel is that Jesus came to earth both fully human and fully God. He stepped into the human experience complete with mind, emotion and will. Being human meant that He grew and experienced human developmental stages.

Jesus experienced the developmental stages that every human being does. The Bible provides a glimpse into his development through the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. All four authors clearly depict Jesus' growth both physically and spiritually. The events of Jesus' life recorded in Scripture are: (1) Jesus was born in Bethlehem (Luke 1:5-2:20); (2) took flight to Egypt as a young child with his parents (Matthew 2:13); (3) taught in the temple at the age of twelve (Luke 2:41-52); (4) was known as a carpenter prior to his years of ministry (Mark 6:2-3); and, (5) began his ministry around 30 years of age (Luke 4:14). Each of these stages were expressed counter to his Jewish culture.

In the Jewish culture, according to the Mishnah (religious instruction), children are to: (1) begin learning from the Bible at the age of five; (2) begin studying the Mishnah at age ten; and, (3) reached the age of mitzvot at the age of thirteen.⁸³ Jesus departed from

⁸³Jewish Agency, The. "Biblical Perspectives of Child Development." August 2005. Accessed April 4, 2017. <http://www.jewishagency.org/life-cycle/content/24224>.

the cultural tradition by not only listening to the teaching in the temple, but He was doing the teaching at the age of twelve. In other areas, Jesus attained other developmental milestones. The Bible never indicates that Jesus married. According to Jewish culture most men and women were married at the age of eighteen. At the age of twenty, most Jewish young people pursued a vocation. Jesus is recorded to have been a carpenter. Jewish culture indicates a person is at the height of their strength at the age of thirty. Jesus began His ministry at the age of thirty. As Jesus began teaching he was recognized by the elders and leaders to be teaching as one with both wisdom and authority (Matt. 7:29). The age of forty was the age at which Jewish culture indicated that a person had attained wisdom.⁸⁴ Jesus was also asked numerous questions. He did not hesitate to give advice or instruction. Jewish culture indicated that one could give advice at the age of fifty.⁸⁵ Jesus was certainly unique! In some ways, the humanity of Jesus was subject to the developmental stages of the culture. However, in spiritual development and maturity, the divine nature of Jesus easily surpassed his cultural expectations.

Luke 2:52 indicates that his growth was not merely spiritual, but concurrently physical. “And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.” The term *stature* does not only indicate a person’s natural height, but it can also refer to a person’s reputation that is gained through their achievements or natural abilities.⁸⁶ Every human that lives on earth goes through developmental stages. Jesus was no exception. He grew and matured from infancy, to childhood, to adolescence, and then arrived at

⁸⁴Jewish Agency, The. “Biblical Perspectives of Child Development.” August 2005. Accessed April 2017. <http://www.jewishagency.org/life-cycle/content/24224>.

⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶*Merriam-Webster*, s.v. “Stature.” Accessed online June 4, 2017. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/stature>.

adulthood. Although contrary to the cultural developmental stages at the time, Jesus was a living example of healthy transition through each stage. His life was a pattern for every human after Him. Growth and development cannot be disregarded as the most central theme of all life. This was true in Jesus' day, and it remains true today.

Schwartz, Côté, & Arnett have conducted a considerable amount of research concerning late teens through mid-twenty-something young adults, also known as Emerging Adults:

During the past half-century, the transition to adulthood has become increasingly prolonged in virtually every postindustrial society. Young people in these societies now stay in school longer, marry later, and have their first child later than they did in the past... it has been proposed that these years [from the late teens until the mid-twenties] now constitute a potentially new and distinct developmental period, called *emerging adulthood*, between adolescence and adulthood.⁸⁷

Their research clearly identified a developmental stage that is not adolescence or adulthood. Although having some traits of both adolescence and adulthood, this group of young people interact with each other, other generations, and the world in a unique way. It is because of these unique young people that it is essential for church outreach leaders to learn about and understand the Emerging Adulthood developmental stage to engage successfully these young people. One must understand comprehensively the people whom one wishes to reach.

With greater access to information, opinions, and peer influences via social media and the Internet, today's young people seem to have become stagnate in the maturation process. Transition into adulthood appears to take longer. Yet, they are no longer adolescents. *Psychology Today* states,

Adolescence describes the teenage years between 13 and 19 and can be considered the transitional stage from childhood to adulthood. However, the physical and

⁸⁷Schwartz, Seth J., James E. Côté, and Jeffrey Jensen Arnett. "Identity and Agency in Emerging Adulthood Two Developmental Routes in the Individualization Process." *Youth & Society*. Vol. 37, no. 2 (2005): 201-229.

psychological changes that occur in adolescence can start earlier, during the preteen or "tween" years (ages 9 through 12). Adolescence can be a time of both disorientation and discovery. The transitional period can bring up issues of independence and self-identity; many adolescents and their peers face tough choices regarding schoolwork, sexuality, drugs, alcohol, and social life. Peer groups, romantic interests, and external appearance tend to naturally increase in importance for some time during a teen's journey toward adulthood.⁸⁸

Yet, they are not yet adults. According to the online *Psychology Dictionary*, adulthood is “the timeframe of growth when physical maturation is has been attained and specific biologic, mental, cultural, individual characteristics, and various other developments concerned with getting older have taken place.”⁸⁹ Emerging Adults have not arrived at this stage of development. They are “in-between” adolescence and adulthood, thus experiencing liminality developmentally.

Taken together, the unstructured nature of emerging adulthood, the vast array of potential identity choices, and the lack of external guidance (a) have made identity development a personal project for many emerging adults and (b) may require the exercise of agency in negotiating the passage to adulthood.⁹⁰

According to Schwartz, Côté, & Arnett, the formation of identity appears to be central to completing the tasks and moving from Emerging Adulthood to adulthood.

Erik Erikson (1902-1994) explored and defined stages of human growth and development. He designated eight stages in which individual seek to resolve “crises” to become a “complete” person. Two stages are particularly relevant in examining the transition between adolescence and adulthood: Identity versus Role Confusion, and Intimacy versus Isolation.⁹¹

⁸⁸*Psychology Today*. “Adolescence.” Accessed online April 13, 2017.
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/adolescence>.

⁸⁹*Psychology Dictionary*, s.v. “Adulthood.” Accessed online June 4, 2017.
<http://psychologydictionary.org/adulthood/>.

⁹⁰*Ibid*.

⁹¹Munley, Patrick. “Erik Erikson’s Theory of Psychosocial Development Vocational Behavior.” *Journal of Counseling Psychology*. 22:4, July 1975. 314-319.

Identity versus Role Confusion typically takes place between the ages of 12 and 18. It is during this period of growth and development that the search for “self” takes place.

Adolescents struggle with questions such as “Who am I?” and “What do I want to do with my life?” Along the way, most adolescents try on many different selves to see which ones fit; they explore various roles and ideas, set goals, and attempt to discover their “adult” selves. Adolescents who are successful at this stage have a strong sense of identity and are able to remain true to their beliefs and values in the face of problems and other people’s perspectives. When adolescents are apathetic, do not make a conscious search for identity, or are pressured to conform to their parents’ ideas for the future, they may develop a weak sense of self and experience role confusion. They will be unsure of their identity and confused about the future. Teenagers who struggle to adopt a positive role will likely struggle to “find” themselves as adults.⁹²

Erikson determined this stage as one that undoubtedly impacted the transition into adulthood. In fact, answering these questions “Who am I?” and “What do I want to do with my life?” determines one’s actions, decisions, and worldviews.

Erikson contended that, immediately following the search for identity, an individual enters the Intimacy versus Isolation stage. His theory suggests, “After we have developed a sense of self in adolescence, we are ready to share our life with others.” According to Erik Erikson’s theory, “Intimacy versus isolation is the major developmental challenge of early adulthood (ages 20-39).”⁹³ According to Boundless.com, an online textbook source, these young people need to resolve earlier stages in development or it causes issues beginning in this stage, “However, if other stages have not been successfully resolved, young adults may have trouble developing and maintaining successful

⁹²Boundless Textbooks. “Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development.” Sep. 2016. Accessed December 20, 2016. <https://www.boundless.com/psychology/textbooks/boundless-psychology-textbook/human-development-14/theories-of-human-development-70/erikson-s-stages-of-psychosocial-development-269-12804/>.

⁹³Passer, Michael W. and Ronald E. Smith. *Psychology: The Science of Mind and Behavior*, 5th Ed. 451.

relationships with others. Adults who do not develop a positive self-concept in adolescence may experience feelings of loneliness and emotional isolation.”⁹⁴ Today’s society is seeing a drastic increase in the number of young people in their early twenties experiencing a lack of identity, loneliness, depression, and feelings of disconnectedness from others.

Many of the challenges faced by young people occur between the two stages indicated by Erikson. Young adults tend to struggle to form identity, form attachments, and experience intimacy. Jeffrey Arnett has called this specific developmental stage Emerging Adulthood.⁹⁵

In their article “Identity and Agency in Emerging Adulthood,” Schwartz, Côté, & Arnett discuss identity formation of the Emerging Adult. Their findings are consistent with and appear to complement Erikson’s psychosocial moratorium:

One of the most striking features of emerging adulthood is that it represents an extension of Erikson’s psychosocial moratorium, the period during which youth are free to explore potential identity alternatives without having to assume permanent adult commitments. Overall, for Erikson, the identity stage is potentially a time to enhance ego capacities, such as agentic abilities and strengths, and to master difficulties and obstacles presented by the social environment [the culture within which they are immersed].⁹⁶

Schwartz, Côté, & Arnett suggest that the Emerging Adult developmental stage bridges the gap between Erickson’s two stages of adolescence and adulthood. While the Emerging

⁹⁴*Boundless Textbooks*. “Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development.” Sep. 2016. Accessed online December 20, 2016. <https://www.boundless.com/psychology/textbooks/boundless-psychology-textbook/human-development-14/theories-of-human-development-70/erikson-s-stages-of-psychosocial-development-269-12804/>.

⁹⁵Arnett, Jeffrey J. “Emerging Adulthood: A Theory of Development from the Late Teens Through the Twenties.” *American Psychologist*, Vol. 5, No. 5 (May 2000): 469-480.

⁹⁶Schwartz, Seth J., James E. Côté, and Jeffrey Jensen Arnett. "Identity and agency in emerging adulthood two developmental routes in the individualization process." *Youth & Society*. Vol. 37, no. 2 (2005): 201-229.

Adult has not yet resolved Erikson's Identity versus Role Confusion stage, they have simultaneously entered the Intimacy versus Isolation stage, within which they continue to explore and establish their identity.⁹⁷

Emerging Adults have become skeptical of society, to include institutions such as government and the church. The constant stream of information and opinions has drastically impacted the worldviews, attitudes, and behaviors of this unique group. One important impact is that it has changed, and in some cases eliminated, "liminal rites of passage" among Emerging Adults. Scheer, Gavazzi, and Blumenkrantz discuss rites of passage in their article, stating: "Rites of passage are powerful social events that help guide and affirm a transition from one status in life to another. One of the most critical transitions is from adolescence to adulthood, where much hangs in the balance."⁹⁸ Rites of passage, in both church and society, are necessary for Emerging Adults to assimilate into their community, deepen connections with peers and mentors, connect with their true meaning and purpose in life, and ultimately encounter authentic spirituality. Without these liminal experiences, Emerging Adults disengage from faith and secular communities and attempt to recreate these essential milestones in non-conventional, and sometimes, unhealthy ways.⁹⁹

Yet, according to recent research Emerging Adults have different criteria for adulthood with which they evaluate their own experience. Their criteria for adulthood

⁹⁷Whiteman, Darrell L. "Contextualization: The Theory, the Gap and the Challenge." *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*; Jan 1997, Vol. 21, Issue 1. 2. 226.

⁹⁸Scheer, Scott D., Stephen M. Gavazzi, and David G. Blumenkrantz. "Rites of Passage During Adolescence." NC State University. *The Forum for Family and Consumer Issues. Vol. 12, no.2* (2007). Accessed online June 1, 2017. <https://ncsu.edu/ffci/publications/2007/v12-n2-2007-summer-fall/scheer.php>.

⁹⁹Scheer, Scott D., Stephen M. Gavazzi, and David G. Blumenkrantz. "Rites of Passage During Adolescence." NC State University. *The Forum for Family and Consumer Issues. Vol. 12, no.2* (2007).

include “. . . taking responsibility for one’s actions, independent decision making, and financial independence from parents.”¹⁰⁰ This developmental stage has unique qualities. For the emerging adult, this is a period for individual exploration characterized by: (1) “experimenting with work, relationships, and worldviews;” (2) exploring how one “lacks transitional roles that prepare them for adult roles” and responsibilities; (3) “entering increasingly intimate, nonmarital relationships;” and (4) they are engaging in “high rates of risky behaviors such as unprotected sex, illegal drug use, and driving while drunk.”¹⁰¹

Emerging Adulthood is a time of instability and ambivalence. Whether changing colleges, residences, or even jobs, these young people tend to live in the flux, constantly shifting from one experience to another. As a result, many young people report increasing amounts of depression. Per self-report, some of the causes for their depression include “psychological harm to the self by others, separation from someone close, conflict with someone close, loneliness, and feelings of incompetence.”¹⁰² One glaring element that cannot be ignored is the lack of significant and meaningful relationships experienced by this portion of young people. Perhaps it is because this age is predominantly self-focused. Yet, the correlation between the increase of depression and the lack of meaningful relationships is without coincidence.¹⁰³

Today, transition into adulthood is riddled with confusion, lacks significant role models, and has become entirely subjective. I concur with Schwartz, Cote, and Arnett that there is a distinct developmental stage in between adolescence and adulthood with unique

¹⁰⁰Nelson, Barry. “Distinguishing Features of Emerging Adulthood: The Role of Self-Classification as an Adult.” *Journal of Adolescent Research*. Vol. 20, No. 2, March 2005. 242-262.

¹⁰¹Ibid, 243.

¹⁰²Ibid, 246.

¹⁰³ Kuwabara, Sachiko A. “A Qualitative Exploration of Depression in Emerging Adults: Disorder, Development, and Social Context.” *General Hospital Psychology*. Vol. 29, no.4 (2007). 317-324.

characteristics. Although this varies from the early Biblical view of development, I believe that seeing development from a cultural perspective is necessary today, just as it was in Jesus' time. Culture defines what adulthood is, and Postmodern American society is without exception.

Erikson's developmental stages are still found in today's Psychology textbooks and presented as the leading theory of human growth and development. There was a time in history that his developmental stages were accurate and useful for defining human growth and developmental stages. However, as culture has changed, I believe that Erikson's model should reflect the cultural changes that has taken place since its development in 1950. Erikson looked at growth and development within the cultural context of 1950. Although the information remains valid, I believe that Arnett's theory should be included in a revised model reflecting today's societal changes.

In conclusion, this research project seeks to educate today's church outreach leaders about this important developmental caveat if evangelism efforts are to be successful. However, education about this group of young people is not the only thing needed to engage successfully the Emerging Adult population. Successful engagement also requires cultural sensitivity and contextualization to ensure the message of the Gospel is clearly understood.

Sharing the Gospel Requires Cultural Sensitivity and Contextualization

What is culture and how does it impact society? The Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition defines culture as the "shared patterns of behavior and interactions, cognitive constructs, and affective understanding, that are learned through a

process of socialization.”¹⁰⁴ Lederach contributes this definition of culture, “Culture is the shared knowledge and schemes created by a set of people for perceiving, interpreting, expressing, and responding to the social realities around them.”¹⁰⁵ Hofstede sums up culture by stating, “Culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one category of people from another.”¹⁰⁶

Ed Stetzer writes about the connection between culture and contextualization, stating, “. . . all people live in a culture of some sort. There is no neutral position, one that might allow a person to stand in a cultural vacuum and make objective pronouncements on the cultures of others. All people, whether they realize it or not, are shaped by the culture in which they live.”¹⁰⁷ People live within the confines of a culture. It is impossible for an individual to separate themselves from a cultural context to become objective regarding the cultures of others.

Culture influences every aspect of life and is evident in values, attitudes and behaviors of every people group. Some of the key roles that culture plays within society are: 1) preserving knowledge and helping to transmit it between generations; 2) defines social “norms;” 3) defines attitudes, values, and worthwhile endeavors; 4) culture sets limits on choices, careers in particular; 5) provides behavior patterns; 6) influences both personality and identity formation; 7) makes humans regulate conduct and prepare for life;

¹⁰⁴Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition. “What is culture?” University of Minnesota. May 2014. Accessed online January 2, 2017. <http://carla.umn.edu/culture/definitions.html>.

¹⁰⁵ Lederach, J.P. *Preparing for Peace: Conflict transformation across cultures*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1995. 9.

¹⁰⁶Hofstede, Geert, Bram Neuijen, Denise Daval Ohayv, and Geert Sanders. "Measuring organizational cultures: A qualitative and quantitative study across twenty cases." *Administrative science quarterly*. Vol. 35, no. 2, June 1990. 286-316.

¹⁰⁷Stetzer, Ed. *Christianity Today*. “What is Contextualization? Presenting the Gospel in Culturally Relevant Ways.” October 2014. Accessed online January 2, 2017. <http://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2014/october/what-is-contextualization.html>.

8) provides structure for problem solving; 9) keeps social relationships in tact; 10) broadens the outlook of an individual.¹⁰⁸

Culture has many roles within a society and influences nearly every aspect of life. It is logical that culture would be one of the greatest contributors to communication patterns and relationships. Before one can connect with people from a culture, it is important to become aware of one's own culture as well as the culture of the host environment. Becoming culturally aware paves the way for becoming both culturally sensitive and culturally competent. To communicate clearly and comprehensively, one must consider the impact of culture.

Cultural influences do not stand alone. Every individual within a culture has developed a worldview, or theory of the world, with which they live within the world. "Worldview is more than culture, even though the distinction between the two can sometimes be subtle. It extends to perceptions of time and space, of happiness and well-being. The beliefs, values, and behaviors of a culture stem directly from its worldview."¹⁰⁹ Merriam-Webster defines worldview as "a comprehensive conception or apprehension of the world from a specific standpoint."¹¹⁰ In the *Associates for Biblical Research*, Henry Smith writes, "A worldview consists of a series of assumptions/presuppositions that a person holds about reality. A worldview, consciously or subconsciously, affects the way a person evaluates every aspect of reality... These

¹⁰⁸Kumar, Bharat. "What are the 12 Essential Roles of Culture in Society?" PreserveArticles.com. February 2011. Accessed May 1, 2017. <http://www.preservearticles.com/201102214077/what-are-the-12-essential-roles-of-culture-in-society.html>.

¹⁰⁹Rusbult, Craig. "What is a Worldview?" *The American Scientific Affiliation*. August 2012. Accessed online May 5, 2017. <http://asa3.org/ASA/education/views/index.html>.

¹¹⁰ *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, s.v. "Worldview." Accessed online June 4, 2017. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/worldview>.

presuppositions affect the thinking of every person in the world.”¹¹¹ David Noebel provides an extended definition in his text, *Understanding the Times*:

The term worldview refers to any ideology, philosophy, theology, movement or religion that provides an overarching approach to understanding God, the world, and man’s relations to God and the world. Specifically, a worldview should contain a particular perspective regarding each of the following ten disciplines: theology, philosophy, ethics, biology, psychology, sociology, law, politics, economics, and history.¹¹²

Understanding the definition of a worldview is important to understand how a culture communicates and interprets information. By understanding a worldview one can discover how to utilize context as a platform for communication within a group of people. It is because of the beliefs found in each culture’s worldview the Gospel must be contextualized if it is to be understood and received.

Becoming aware culturally is the foundation for contextualization, especially as it applies to the process of evangelism and sharing the Gospel with a different culture. “In its original sense, contextualization is the process of assigning meaning as a means of interpreting the environment within which a text is executed.”¹¹³ Tullian Tchividjian quotes Chuck Colson as he speaks of the part contextualization plays in effective evangelism practices:

We must enter the stories of the surrounding culture, which takes real listening. We connect with the literature, music, theater, arts, and issues that express the existing culture’s hopes, dreams, and fears. This builds a bridge by which we can show how the Gospel can enter and transform those stories.¹¹⁴

¹¹¹Smith, Henry B. Jr. “What is a Worldview?” *Associates for Biblical Research*. 3 November 2005. Accessed online May 5, 2017. <http://asa3.org/ASA/education/views/index.html>.

¹¹²Noebel, David. *Understanding the Times*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1991.

¹¹³Wheeler, Ray. “The Legacy of Shoki Coe,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*. Vol. 26, 2, 2002. 77-80.

¹¹⁴Tchividjian, Tullian. “Contextualization Without Compromise.” *The Gospel Coalition*. 10 March 2010. Accessed online May 5, 2017. <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/contextualization-without-compromise>.

Colson presented contextualization as the primary means of effective communication of the Gospel message within any culture. During his active years in ministry, Tullian Tchividjian also echoed the importance of contextualization:

We all live inescapably within a cultural framework that shapes the way we think about everything. So if we don't work hard to understand our context, we'll not only fail in our task to effectively communicate the gospel, but we'll also find it impossible to avoid being negatively shaped by a world we don't understand.¹¹⁵

Cultural awareness provides the information necessary to “speak” the language of the culture. In the same article, Edith Schaeffer, wife renowned theologian Francis Schaeffer, is quoted with her perspective of contextualization and evangelism, “A time of listening is needed- Listening to what the next generation is saying, listening to the words of the music they are listening to, listening to the meaning behind the words. If true communication is to continue, there is a language to be learned.”¹¹⁶ It is imperative that outreach leaders consider the impact of culture on communication if they hope to be effective in their efforts to share the Gospel within society, and even more critical if they hope to reach the de-churched and churchless generation of the Emerging Adult.

When preparing for evangelism in any culture, it is wise, and even prudent to prepare by exegeting the culture. Foreign missionaries have done this for almost 50 years. In fact, the term “contextualization” was first introduced in 1971 and “inculturation” in 1974. In fact, in Peter Schineller’s *A Handbook for Inculturation*, he contends, “We have an obligation to search continually for ways in which the good news can be more deeply

¹¹⁵Tchividjian, Tullian. “Contextualization Without Compromise.” *The Gospel Coalition*. 10 March 2010. Accessed online May 5, 2017. <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/contextualization-without-compromise>.

¹¹⁶Ibid.

lived, celebrated and shared.”¹¹⁷ Darrell L. Whiteman echoes this sentiment and elaborates deeper as to the role of contextualization in sharing the Gospel:

Contextualization attempts to communicate the Gospel in word and deed and to establish the church in ways that make sense to people in their local cultural context, presenting Christianity in such a way that it meets people’s deepest needs and penetrates their worldview, thus allowing them to follow Christ and remain within their own culture.¹¹⁸

Rather than enticing people to assimilate into the church culture and practices, it is essential that leaders help people understand and apply a faith principle in a relevant and meaningful way within their own cultural setting. By doing so, one may be able to see and experience a clearer picture of the Kingdom of God.

Contextualization invites people to engage with human diversity in fresh and vibrant ways. In a sense, each person can learn how to live out their faith more fully in their own context when the Gospel appears to come alive in another. Much like short-term mission trips to various cultures, whether local or international, those on mission are left forever changed by encountering the body of Christ in a context unlike their own. Whiteman concludes his article with these words: “The incarnation is our model for contextualization, for as J.D. Gordon once said, ‘Jesus is God spelled out in language human beings can understand’- I would add, -’in every culture, in every context.’”¹¹⁹

Contextualization, however, does not mean that the Gospel message is adapted or changed to suit the culture. The message remains intact, while the language is altered to

¹¹⁷Schineller, Peter. *A Handbook for Inculturation*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1990. 3. Accessed online May 15, 2017. <http://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/488655>.

¹¹⁸Whiteman, Darrell. “Contextualization: The Theory, the Gap, the Challenge.” Accessed online May 13, 2017. <http://spu.edu/temp/denuol/context.htm>.

¹¹⁹Whiteman, Darrell. “Contextualization: The Theory, the Gap, the Challenge.” Accessed online May 13, 2017. <http://spu.edu/temp/denuol/context.htm>.

demonstrate the Gospel in terms that the culture can clearly understand. This is the constant tension that exists when entering a culture other than one's own.

Adaptation, also known as syncretism, happens when, "Christian leaders accommodate to the prevailing structure or worldviews of their culture... Christianity loses its distinctiveness and speaks with a voice reflective of its culture."¹²⁰ Geiger continues, elaborating on other common errors in contextualization in his article, "Common Errors in Contextualization," and states, "Many churches have allowed the culture to hijack and define the biblical message."¹²¹ Geiger is referring to churches that incorporate homosexuality and gay marriage into their churches and fail to adhere to the standards outlined in the Bible.

Adaptation has many definitions but the one most fitting for this discussion is from the Encyclopedia Britannica, "The process by which an animal or plant species [or in this case a church] becomes fitted to its environment."¹²² In addition to this definition, this encyclopedia entry also indicates adaptation is the result of natural selection in which only the strongest in the environment survive. The word was first used in the 17th century to describe the relationship between design and function of a given entity.¹²³ This is an accurate description of over-contextualized churches today. With many churches closing their doors each week churches choose to adapt and thereby play the "survival of the fittest" game. Contextualization provides a way to communicate within a culture, without

¹²⁰ Geiger, Erik. "Common Errors in Contextualization." *Lifeway Christian Resources*. January 2013. Accessed online May 13, 2017. <https://ericgeiger.com/2013/01/common-errors-in-contextualization/>.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² *Encyclopedia Britannica*, s.v. "Adaptation." Accessed online June 4, 2017. <https://www.britannica.com/science/adaptation-biology-and-physiology>.

¹²³ *Encyclopedia Britannica*, s.v. "Adaptation." Accessed online June 4, 2017. <https://www.britannica.com/science/adaptation-biology-and-physiology>.

compromise the message of the Gospel. Churches can then rely on the Holy Spirit for survival, rather than keeping up with cultural dictations.

Tchividjian provides a notable example of contextualization versus adaptation in his article, stating, “Every English Bible translation is an effort to contextualize the Scriptures (originally written in Hebrew and Greek for ancient peoples) for an English-speaking audience of today.”¹²⁴ Adaptation of the scriptures is evident in *The Message*, a paraphrased version of the Bible. Eugene Peterson, the author of *The Message*, meant well when he attempted to bring the Scriptures to life with a modern day “translation” of the Bible by using his own words to make the Bible more understandable and readable.¹²⁵ According to 1 Corinthians 2:6-16, it is the role of the Holy Spirit, present in the life of a Christian believer that helps the individual understand and comprehend the words of Scripture. It is not the role of another individual.

Several misunderstandings may result from attempting to contextualize the Gospel message. One such misunderstanding is that the attractional church tends to cater to culture, contextualizing too much and becoming so much like the surrounding culture, it may lose the impact of the Gospel. “Christianity has become more and more secularized as it aims to adapt easily to the current world for its survival.”¹²⁶ Over-contextualization creates a watered-down Gospel message.

¹²⁴ Tchividjian, Tullian. “Contextualization Without Compromise.” *The Gospel Coalition*. 10 March 2010. Accessed online May 5, 2017. <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/contextualization-without-compromise>.

¹²⁵ “The Message: Version Information.” Accessed online April 6, 2017. <https://www.biblegateway.com/versions/Message-MSG-Bible/>.

¹²⁶ Kim, Luther Jeom Ok. “Contextualization in the Post-secular American Society.” *First Fruit*, 2016. Accessed online May 3, 2017. <http://place.asburyseminary.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1066&context=firstfruitpapers>.

Other traditional churches, which fail to contextualize enough, are more at risk of being culturally insensitive and lacking clear communication of the Gospel. Theologian Tim Keller has expressed his concerns about contextualization, stating, “To over-contextualize to a new generation means that you make an idol out of their culture [the Emerging Adult’s culture], but to under-contextualize to a new generation means that you can make an idol of the culture you come from.”¹²⁷ There must be a balance within the context of culture for the Gospel message to be both heard and understood by another culture. Culture must be utilized as the backdrop for communicating Gospel truths.

In the Bible, Paul’s ministry to the Gentiles is an example of what it means to contextualize sharing the Gospel without compromising its message. Paul became “all things to all people” to communicate effectively the redemptive message of the Gospel. In 1 Corinthians 9:19-23 Paul writes:

For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.

Returning to the article, “Contextualization Without Compromise,” Tchividjian provides the following commentary on this passage:

Becoming ‘all things to all people’, therefore, does not mean fitting in with the fallen patterns of this world so there is no distinguishable difference between Christians and non-Christians. While rightly living ‘in the world’, we must avoid the extreme of accommodation- being ‘of the world’. It happens when Christians,

¹²⁷Ibid.

in their attempt to make proper contact with the world, go out of their way to adopt worldly styles, standards, and strategies.¹²⁸

John Piper has discussed his discoveries in past sermons for this passage as well. Through his exegetical process he discovered that one of Paul's purposes for writing this piece, of "becoming all things to all men," was: 1) to not offend those he was trying to reach, by adapting as much as possible in non-sinful ways; and 2) to "win others," "to save some," and to "be a partaker of the benefits of the Gospel."¹²⁹ Piper also indicated that "Paul knew that his faith in Christ would be utterly inauthentic and false, if he abandoned the pattern of life set by Jesus and no longer cared for other people."¹³⁰

Jesus provided the ultimate example of contextualization when he became a man, lived among humanity, and experienced all things. Paul addresses Jesus' humanity once again in Hebrews 2:14-18:

Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself [Jesus] likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Because Jesus came to earth as a man, He has first-hand knowledge of that which every human individual experience. He can fully sympathize with each personal experience.¹³¹

¹²⁸Tchividjian, Tullian. "Contextualization Without Compromise." *The Gospel Coalition*. 10 March 2010. Accessed online May 5, 2017. <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/contextualization-without-compromise>.

¹²⁹Piper, John, "Becoming All Things to All Men to Save Some." (sermon, February 18, 1996.) Accessed online May 13, 2017. <http://www.desiringgod.org/messages/becoming-all-things-to-all-men-to-save-some>.

¹³⁰Piper, John, "Becoming All Things to All Men to Save Some." (sermon, February 18, 1996.) Accessed online May 13, 2017. <http://www.desiringgod.org/messages/becoming-all-things-to-all-men-to-save-some>.

¹³¹Donovan, Richard Niell. SermonWriter.com. "Biblical Commentary, Hebrews 2:14-18." 2016. Accessed online May 13, 2017. <https://www.sermonwriter.com/biblical-commentary/hebrews-214-18>.

John 1:14 reads, “And the Word [Jesus] became flesh, and dwelt among us...” According to Pastor Rick Ezell, there are four certainties that can be gleaned from this passage: (1) Jesus became human; (2) Jesus lived among humanity; (3) Jesus revealed His glory; and (4) Jesus invites us to Himself.¹³² Both passages, John 1:14 and Hebrews 2:14-18, communicate that Jesus took on flesh and became human in every way. Yet, at the same time continued to be God. Jesus was the perfect example of contextualization.

Jesus also demonstrated contextualization through building relationships with those outside His Jewish beliefs. Tchividjian contends, “Contextualization also involves building relationships with people who don’t believe. We cannot expect those who do not believe to come to us; we must go to them. We meet them where they are. We enter into their world by seeking to identify with their struggles, their likes, their dislikes, their ideas.”¹³³ Contextualization is not compromising the content of the message, but it is giving people the answers to questions in ways they can understand, based on the culture. Building relationships must be a priority as the church contextualizes its evangelism efforts.

I agree with Bahrat Kumar that culture is one of the greatest contributors of communication patterns and influences on the formation of relationships. For this reason, culture must be examined and understood to communicate effectively within a society. Without fully understanding the language of communication, it is impossible to build meaningful relationships within a culture. Culture cannot be ignored if church outreach

¹³²Ezell, Rick. “Hello, My Name is Jesus. I have Come.” (sermon, First Baptist Church, Greer, SC.) Accessed online May 18, 2017. <http://www.lifeway.com/Article/sermon-hello-my-name-is-jesus-I-have-come-john-1>.

¹³³Tchividjian, Tullian. “Contextualization Without Compromise.” *The Gospel Coalition*. 10 March 2010. Accessed online May 5, 2017. <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/contextualization-without-compromise>.

leaders to develop effective evangelism and engagement strategies. It must be the number one consideration. I agree with Chuck Colson that contextualization is the key to the effective communication of the Gospel.

I believe that contextualization is the metaphorical bridge between the Gospel and a culture. Without it, there are many misunderstandings and muddled messages. I agree with Darrell L. Whiteman's statement that contextualization can present Christianity in a way that "meets people's deepest needs and penetrates their worldviews."¹³⁴ I believe that building relationships based on a contextualized Gospel message and Biblical truth is how to reach the Emerging Adult population of today. Although there have been many attempts to help people understand Scripture and the message that God has for them, such as the creation of The Message version of the Bible, these efforts have served to adapt Christianity to the culture rather than contextualizing the messages. By adapting the Scriptures in this manner, the power of the Holy Spirit to bring understanding and clarity is denied. Although, I do agree that having a readable paraphrase of the Scriptures is helpful when studying and attempting to discern the meaning of a passage of Scripture among many accepted translations.

Believers are called to be "in the world" but not "of the world." They are to follow Jesus' life patterns of kindness, compassion, and incarnation. Jesus worked to make the Gospel message relevant to the culture He was part of the culture without losing the urgency and impact of the Gospel message. He was unafraid of the culture within which He lived. As a result He brought a message to both Jews and Gentiles in a language they were familiar with and within a cultural context they could comprehend. Jesus' model of

¹³⁴Whiteman, Darrell. "Contextualization: The Theory, the Gap, the Challenge." Accessed online May 13, 2017. <http://spu.edu/temp/denuol/context.htm>.

contextualization calls Christians to consider the impact of culture communication with people part of a foreign culture. Without considering the implications of culture, it is nearly impossible to communicate the consistent and clear message of hope offered through the Gospel.

Enhanced Communication Skills Aid in Building Rapport and Establishing Trust

Whether translating the Bible or developing relationships with non-Christians, Believers are to be missionary minded in everything they do. That takes work- the hard effort of maintaining the big picture and communicating comprehensively and compellingly to those who don't share our convictions and worldview. Therefore, every day and in every circumstance, we need to be consciously and rigorously translating our faith into the language of the culture we are trying to reach.¹³⁵

Communicating “comprehensively and compellingly” requires special training and skills. In fact, few outreach leaders are versed in the impact of culture on communication. Before addressing the implications of communication, it is important to have a clear understanding of Communication Theory.

Communication Theory was proposed by S. F. Scudder in 1980. Communication Theory simply states that “. . .all living beings [plants, animals, and humans] existing on the planet communicate... through sound, speech, visible changes, body movements,

¹³⁵Tchividjian, Tullian. “Contextualization Without Compromise.” *The Gospel Coalition*. 10 March 2010. Accessed online May 5, 2017. <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/contextualization-without-compromise>.

gestures... to make others aware of their thoughts, feelings, problems, happiness or any other information.”¹³⁶

There are five main viewpoints to consider when exploring Communication Theory. Communication is: (1) Mechanistic - Transmission of information from one party to another; (2) Psychological - Flow of information from one to another, but also includes the thoughts and feelings that the sender wants to share; (3) Social - A result of two individuals interacting with one another; (4) Systematic - A new and different message for each individual to interpret on their own and come to their own conclusions; and (5) Critical - A way to express power and authority among others.¹³⁷ One of the most important elements to recognize in Communication Theory is that essential to the survival of every living thing.

Although communication is essential for survival, it is not always effective. There are many barriers that prevent effective communication from taking place: (1) noise - which results in a distorted message; (2) unorganized thoughts; (3) wrong interpretations; (4) not fully understanding the audience (and the culture they are from); (5) ignoring the content - must be clear, crisp, and interesting; (6) avoiding eye contact with the audience; (7) not checking that the other individual is receiving the information correctly; (8) not understanding the mood of the recipient; (9) low pitch and tone; (10) impatient listener; and (11) internal barriers - cultural differences.¹³⁸ Each of these elements can render communication ineffective.

¹³⁶MSG Experts. “Communication Theory.” Managementstudyguide.com. Accessed online April 13, 2017. <http://www.managementstudyguide.com/communication-theory.htm>.

¹³⁷MSG Experts. “Communication Theory.” Managementstudyguide.com. Accessed online April 13, 2017. <http://www.managementstudyguide.com/communication-theory.htm>.

¹³⁸MSG Experts. “Role of Communication Barriers in Ineffective Communication.” Managementstudyguide.com. Accessed online April 13, 2017. <http://www.managementstudyguide.com/role-of-communication-barriers-in-ineffective-communication.htm>.

One of the biggest problems today in evangelism is that the message of the Gospel is not being understood by the audience for whom it is intended. Two of the most significant barriers to effective communication of the Gospel is not fully understanding the culture of the audience and cultural “noise,”¹³⁹ Emerging Adults are often misunderstood, and their culture is not considered when outreach leaders strive to share with them the Gospel message. If outreach leaders are to have the Gospel message heard, it is imperative that they eliminate barriers that prevent evangelism efforts from being effective. In this case, learning how to communicate with the Emerging Adult population is of the utmost importance.

Cultural noise comes in many forms. Among Emerging Adults, cultural and environmental “noise” is often in the form of technology.¹⁴⁰ Outreach leaders must learn to navigate within the Emerging Adult culture and reduce cultural noise if the Gospel is to be heard.

Communication does not exist in a vacuum and neither does culture. According to Gumperz and Gumperz, “Communication cannot be studied in isolation; it must be analyzed in terms of its effect on people’s lives. We must focus on what communication does: how it constrains evaluation and decision making, not merely how it is structured.”¹⁴¹ Communication is woven tightly with humanity and to understand it is to understand people. Western culture today is diverse. Cultural implications must be

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ *Boundless Textbooks*. “Noise as a Barrier to Communication.” May 26, 2016. Accessed online May 5, 2017. <https://www.boundless.com/management/textbooks/boundless-management-textbook/communication-11/barriers-to-effective-communication-84/noise-as-a-barrier-to-communication-405-1507/>.

¹⁴¹ Gumperz, John J., and Jenny Cook-Gumperz. “Introduction: Language and the Communication of Social Identity.” *Language and social identity*. University of California, Berkley. 1982. 1-21.

considered when looking at language, as culture impacts every aspect of daily life, including communication. Gumperz & Gumperz continue with the following:

What distinguishes today's [culture] is that the modes of interaction among subgroups and the ways in which individuals of different backgrounds must relate to each other and to the system by which they are governed has changed... We have become increasingly dependent on public services and on cooperation with others who may not share our culture... difficulties tend to arise when individuals of different cultural backgrounds communicate... When backgrounds differ, [communication] can be plagued by misunderstandings, mutual misrepresentations of events and misvaluations..."¹⁴²

Today's society has drastically changed in how it communicates with one another. It is paramount to look at these changes when considering the best way to communicate with a subgroup such as Emerging Adults. Many outreach leaders today lack cultural training. More significantly, they lack communication skills that provide for effective communication to their intended audiences.

In his book, *Creating Understanding*, David Smith discusses three essential elements for effective cross-cultural communication: (1) all communication is cross-cultural to some degree; (2) culture is the way we organize our experiences to develop worldview, values, beliefs, a social framework, and behavior patterns; and (3) communication is the human part of proclamation [of the Gospel message] and discipline.¹⁴³ Smith continues with the following, "There are hundreds of committed men and women in ministry who need this [communication] information. Their frequent inability to reach deep needs of their people frustrates, and even breaks, the will to

¹⁴²Gumperz, John J., and Jenny Cook-Gumperz. "Introduction: Language and the Communication of Social Identity." *Language and social identity*. University of California, Berkeley. 1982. 4.

¹⁴³Smith, David. *Creating Understanding*. Grand Rapids, MI. Zondervan, 1992. 7-17.

serve.”¹⁴⁴ If outreach leaders are to be successful in their endeavors to effectively share the Gospel, it is crucial that they learn effective communication skills.

Communication skills are the basis for building relationships and rapport between two persons. According to Michael J. Losier, author of *The Law of Connection*, rapport is key to communication and is defined as “relationship; esp. a close or sympathetic relationship; agreement; harmony.”¹⁴⁵ Establishing rapport is the foundation of connecting with another human being and becomes the filter through which all communication flows. Losier’s Law of Connection states, “When two people are in rapport they will have a better connection... The rule: The more rapport you have with somebody, the stronger your connection with that person. The less rapport you have with someone (or when the rapport is broken) the weaker your connection with that person. Your rapport, and therefore your connection, is the result of how you communicate.”¹⁴⁶ Rapport is essential for effective evangelism efforts.

Although effective to some extent, “friendship” or “lifestyle” evangelism are not the most effective forms of evangelism. Authentic relationships, whether friends or strangers, are the most effective ways by which to communicate the truth of the Gospel.

Barna research shows that the unchurched are becoming less responsive to church's efforts to connect with them. For example, conventional wisdom says the best way to get people to visit a church is to have friends invite them—and the conventional wisdom is right. The churchless we interviewed were most open to ‘a friend of yours inviting you to attend a local church,’ with one-fifth expressing strong interest and nearly half willing to consider a church based on this factor. An invitation from a friend is the top-rated way churches can establish connections with the unchurched.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁴Ibid, 8.

¹⁴⁵Losier, Michael J. *The Law of Connection*. New York, NY: Wellness Central, 2009. 3.

¹⁴⁶Ibid, xiii.

¹⁴⁷Barna Group, The. “5 Trends Among the Unchurched.” *Research Releases in Culture and Media*. October 9, 2014. Accessed January 17, 2017. <https://www.barna.com/research/five-trends-among-the-unchurched/>.

However, at times, relationships can become forced, turning into “tasks” and losing authenticity. To be authentic, an individual must first become a student of the other. The individual must learn about the culture, customs, and language to share a contextualized Gospel message. This is often done through connecting one’s personal story to that of the other person. According to Dr. Maria Dixon Hall, the Associate Professor of Organizational Communication, Director of Communication Studies, and adjunct associate professor of Homiletics at Southern Methodist University, “The strongest evangelistic tool in the Christian arsenal is the personal testimony,” and, “The foundation of the Christian testimony is sharing and self-disclosure [building rapport] about one’s experience with Christ.”¹⁴⁸

Storytelling is a constructive communication skill. In fact, anthropologists use storytelling in field research through ethnography. Ethnography is defined by Rockstar Research as, “The practice of spending time with a subject group to better understand behaviors, interactions [such as communication] and overall culture.”¹⁴⁹ John Armstrong defines ethnography more specifically in his article:

Ethnography is a quantitative form of research aimed at exploring cultural phenomena. The resulting field study, or a case report, reflects the knowledge and the system of meanings in the lives of a cultural group. Ethnography is a means by which we can represent graphically, and in writing, the culture of a particular people. It is rooted in empirical data gathered from human societies and cultures...

¹⁴⁸Dixon Hall, Maria. “Evangelism, Communication, and Church Growth.” (Lecture, 4 October 2014). Accessed online May 4, 2017. <http://www.vaumc.org/ncfilerepository/5TalentAcademy/PresenterSlides.pdf>.

¹⁴⁹Armstrong, John. “Ethnography- Developing the Pastoral Skill of Mission.” August 6, 2013. Accessed online May 4, 2017. <http://johnharmstrong.com/ethnography-developing-the-pastoral-skill-of-mission/>.

It has become popular in the social sciences in general, and in sociology and communication studies more specifically.”¹⁵⁰

Ethnography has become one of the most important ways for learning about and communicating within a culture that differs from the researcher’s own. Armstrong concludes with this thought, “Leaders who grasp this new context, and then become ‘participant-observers’ [those that study the culture by immersing themselves within it], will be those that are able to get inside of the story of the peoples and proclaim the gospel with life changing power in effective ways.”¹⁵¹ It is by becoming a “participant-observer” that outreach leaders can effectively communicate the Gospel to any culture, but more specifically to the emerging adult population.

Jesus provided, for His followers, a pattern for living using ethnography. Jesus lived among the people with whom He desired to impact. Although He traveled from town to town, He understood that each story needed to be communicated in such a way that the people could understand and relate to it. Jesus used parables such as the Prodigal Son (Matt. 21:28-32), The Lost Coin (Matt. 18:12-14), and The Good Samaritan (Matt. 22:34-40) to teach about the Kingdom of God. These and many other stories are recorded in the Word of God and have been passed down through the generations.

Ethnography provides a way to interpret culture and discover the most powerful, relevant ways to communicate within a given culture. Ethnography is essential for developing shared meanings and experiences. Shared meanings and experiences are important for understanding context and developing effective communication.

¹⁵⁰Armstrong, John. “Ethnography- Developing the Pastoral Skill of Mission.” August 6, 2013. Accessed online May 4, 2017. <http://johnharmstrong.com/ethnography-developing-the-pastoral-skill-of-mission/>

¹⁵¹Ibid.

Understanding context and developing effective communication strategies are two foundational elements of contextualization. Evangelism cannot survive in a diverse world without outreach leaders being specially trained to communicate within cultures using contextualization.

S. F. Scudder's Communication Theory describes the mechanics of communication between two individuals. I agree with Scudder as he recognizes that communication is essential to the survival of every living thing. Recognizing the problems associated with clear and effective communication between two individuals gives way to discovering more effective ways to communicate.

According to Management Study Guide (MSG) Experts, two of the most significant barriers to effective communication are not understanding the audience and persistent cultural noise. With this project, I will increase understanding of the cultural diversity of Emerging Adults, reduce cultural "noise," increase meaningful and productive communication, which will potentially increase the efficacy of evangelism efforts among this group of young people.

I agree with Gumperz and Gumperz that cultural implications of communication must be considered when seeking to communicate with clarity and relevance to this population. Outreach leaders who wish to engage effectively Emerging Adults must develop communication skills that transcend cultural boundaries.

David Smith's text, *Creating Understanding*, provides a cross-cultural context for the discovery and building relevant communication skills that can be applied to a multitude of cultural settings. The Emerging Adult population is no exception to his strategies. Smith's text is a response to the question, "How can we meet the deepest needs of this or any culture?" Today's outreach leaders are failing to engage Emerging Adults. I

believe this failure to engage is happening to evangelism efforts because these leaders do not fully understand the impact of culture on communication. This has resulted in leaders failing to meet the deepest needs of these young people through relationships and failing to instill a culturally aware and sensitive community within the church. Helping outreach leaders to understand Emerging Adult population, through ethnographic study and response, will allow new relationships to be forged and the Gospel to be communicated clearly through as they journey with one another. Ethnography bridges the gap between culture and communication.

I believe that without specialized training in cross-cultural communication, outreach leaders will fail to engage effectively the emerging adults today. The next generation will not be “de-churched” as has come to define emerging adults. Rather the next generation of young people will be entirely “un-churched.” Church outreach leaders must take seriously the charge of communicating effectively the life-changing Gospel of Jesus Christ to this portion of Millennials.

CHAPTER 5

PROJECT PLANS AND OBJECTIVES

This project contained specific objectives for both the participants and myself. They were categorized as the following: (1) cognitive, in which the participant will gain new insights and information; (2) affective, particularly examining attitudes and driving forces behind behavior; and (3) skill-based, which are evidence-based practices that demonstrate the incorporation of the cognitive insights. The objectives gave practical and tangible expression of change as seen in the outcomes of the project.

Participants' Objectives

There were three objectives containing measurable results for the project participants: The cognitive, the affective, and skill-based.

First, regarding the cognitive objective, the selected outreach leaders would evidence greater understanding of the Emerging Adult developmental stage. The leaders would express this by:

- a. Identifying Emerging Adult developmental traits
- b. Demonstrating understanding by applying new concepts to new and existing relationships
- c. Evaluating outcomes from current evangelism practices and the application of new techniques

Second, regarding the affective objective, the selected outreach leaders would evidence openness in expressing personal growth and cultural fluency concerning Emerging Adults. The leaders would demonstrate this by:

- a. Identifying personal biases that hinder current outreach efforts with Emerging Adults
- b. Demonstrating a willingness to listen respectfully to Emerging Adults share personal stories
- c. Participating in group coaching sessions, sharing experiences from the field, and openly responding to teaching concepts
- d. Showing appreciation of Emerging Adult developmental differences by initiating new relationships and joining the on their life' journeys

Third, with regard for the skill building objective, the selected outreach leaders would show improvement in communication skills. The leaders would exhibit this by:

- a. Using active listening skills
- b. Communicating with Emerging Adults during teachable moments
- c. Creating liminal spaces that allow for questions and exploration
- d. Communicating their personal story as part of the relationship-building process
- e. Create a context-specific, culturally sensitive implementation plan to assimilate new strategies to engage Emerging Adults in their respective churches

Personal Objectives

There were two objectives containing measurable results that demonstrate personal growth through this project: The cognitive and skill-based.

First, I would clearly define my theological and theoretical positions regarding the need to train adequately outreach leaders to engage effectively Emerging Adults. I would accomplish this by:

- a. Utilizing the exegetical process to select Bible verses providing guidance in evangelism objectives and the importance of contextualization for evangelism
- b. Conducting thorough research to explore my topic in depth
- c. Writing clear and concise theological and theoretical portions for this project
- d. Integrating my knowledge and positions into the curriculum of the project

Second, I would demonstrate my ability to teach a diverse group of church

outreach leaders. I would accomplish this through:

- a. Designing a curriculum with lesson plans which includes creative teaching methods to accommodate the learning needs of the participants in the class
- b. Reviewing and incorporating the selected materials based on relevant Biblical principles, communication techniques, and relationship-building strategies specific to Emerging Adults
- c. Utilizing and modeling the coach approach to create a classroom environment for content rich learning and discovery

CHAPTER 6

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

The project consisted of six weekly, two-hour sessions held at Chapel Hill Presbyterian Church (CHPC) as an outreach training course. The preliminary lesson plans, slides, homework assignments, and handouts were developed during the Spring Quarter from March 2017 to June 2017. The final lesson plans, presentation slides, and homework assignments were completed during my trip to Vietnam in August 2017.

I met with the Associate Pastor of Evangelism, Pastor Ellis White, from CHPC in May of 2017. I presented the preliminary idea and curriculum outline for the training. He pledged his support of the project and asked that I let him know as soon as the project was approved.

On June 16, 2017 the project was approved. I contacted Pastor Ellis White and requested permission to utilize both the CHPC campus and database to recruit participants. Pastor Ellis granted me the permissions, pledged his support of the project, and preliminary recruiting began. I spoke to past mission trip attendees, church leaders, and those who served in college-based ministries. I placed a space reservation request with Julie Hardin at CHPC on June 24, 2017. She was unable to confirm the requested reservation until August 8, 2017. The project was scheduled to take place from September 12, 2017 to October 18, 2017. This complicated the recruiting process as did my being out of the country. As a result, on September 11, 2017 I did not have any participants committed to attending.

I spoke to Julie Hardin and changed the start date of the project to October 4, 2017. The new dates were October 4, 2017 to November 7, 2017. I placed an announcement in the CHPC bulletin the weeks of September 16, 2017 through October 3, 2017. Five people respond with genuine interest. I contacted each potential participant and discussed the requirements of the project. Four participants agreed to attend and fully participate.

Prior to beginning the study, participants were asked to complete a consent document and a brief survey¹⁵² to gather basic contact information, learning styles, gifting, and passion. This was completed prior to the first teaching session so I could prepare adequately for the varied learning styles and participants' backgrounds. To keep the participants' interest in the sessions and subject matter I varied the learning strategies to include: lectures with PowerPoint presentations, group process and sharing, role play, reflective journaling, interactive homework assignments, prayer times, Bible studies, assessments and inventories, as well as cooperative learning projects. I created lessons plans and timed out each activity.

I found Donald McCain's text, *Creating Training Courses (when you're not a trainer)*,¹⁵³ to be exceptional guidelines for writing the training curriculum. McCain's suggested activities for training sessions included: lecture, group discussion, practical skill building, handouts, homework assignments, and videos. Utilizing this text allowed me to prepare lesson plans that that would be both interesting and engaging for participants' varied learning styles. The techniques I chose to enhance learning outcomes were: (1) lecture, (2) group discussion, (3) homework assignments, (4) role play activities, (5) prayer, (6) Bible study, (7) music/content videos, (8) power point slides, and (9) personal

¹⁵² See Appendix 1, 110.

¹⁵³ McCain, Donald. *Creating Training Courses (When You Are Not A Trainer)*. Canada: American Society for Training and Development, 1999.

reflection activities. In addition, I selected activities that would require only pens, paper, clipboards, laptop, projector, projection screen, and chairs in the classroom.

To build trust, establish rapport, and to allow for participant anonymity, I did not record the sensitive information from assignments or that which was shared in the group. Rather, I noted general observations from various classroom interactions and assignments with occasional specific insights from a participant. I analyzed and evaluated session data from a global perspective in the final chapters of this project report.

The initial session was an introduction and overview of the project. I set up the room with the chairs facing toward the projector screen and provided each participant with a notepad, clip board, and pen. I opened the session in prayer. During the first hour, the participants completed a team building activity in which they interviewed and introduced their partner to the group. I presented an overview of the course topics, clarified the project participation expectations, and reiterated the data collection requirements. I facilitated a group discussion on the goals of the project.

After a brief period of questions and answers, all four participants agreed to the attend and fully participate in the training course. There were two female and two male participants. I conducted a short Bible study of Matthew 28:19-20. The participants completed the Inventory of Spiritual/ Emotional Maturity (ISEM).¹⁵⁴ I handed out copies of the text, *I Once Was Lost*,¹⁵⁵ and assigned chapters one through three for the next session. Participants were also given a Reading Note Guide¹⁵⁶ and Interaction Report

¹⁵⁴ See Appendix 2, 112.

¹⁵⁵ Everts, Don and Doug Shaupp. *I Once Was Lost*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008.

¹⁵⁶ See Appendix 3, 117.

Form (IRF).¹⁵⁷ Additionally, I assigned a Church Culture Observation¹⁵⁸ and Evaluation of Outreach Practices Form.¹⁵⁹ I closed the first session in prayer and proceeded to complete the Group Observation Form (GOF).¹⁶⁰

In the second session, I changed the arrangement of the room to a circle of chairs to facilitate better group interactions. I had received a request for one additional female participant to join the training course. I allowed her to participate beginning with the second session since there was little information missed and ensured that she understood the material covered in the first session.

The second session focused on the Emerging Adult developmental stage. I opened the second session with prayer and did a quick review of the previous session. The warm-up activity allowed participants to share areas they felt needed growth according to the ISEM. I then administered the Emerging Adult Knowledge Test (EAKT)¹⁶¹ to establish participant baseline attitudes and behaviors with regards to Emerging Adults.

I utilized music video,¹⁶² educational video,¹⁶³ discussion, and lecture to educate the participants about Emerging Adulthood. I conducted a group life coaching session regarding personal biases and presuppositions to uncover belief systems interfering with

¹⁵⁷ See Appendix 6, 126.

¹⁵⁸ See Appendix 4, 123.

¹⁵⁹ See Appendix 5, 125.

¹⁶⁰ See Appendix 7, 127.

¹⁶¹ See Appendix 8, 128.

¹⁶²Tyler, Micah. "You've Gotta Love Millennials." YouTube video, 02:57. Posted April 30, 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hLpE1Pa8vvl>

¹⁶³Moody, Lindsey. "Emerging Adulthood." YouTube video, 06:13. Posted December 8, 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W1E-m9jetV4>

outreach efforts to the Emerging Adult population. I assigned the reading of chapter four of the text. I also assigned the worksheet Defining Spheres of Influence,¹⁶⁴ and the Reflective Journaling Activity Form (RJAF).¹⁶⁵ I closed the session with prayer and completed the GOF.

The third session focused on communication skills and cultural fluency. I opened the third session with prayer and a completed a quick review of session two content. I then facilitated a discussion about the homework assignments from the previous session. I held a short lecture on active listening and using reflective listening phrases. Participants were administered the Trust Inventory¹⁶⁶ from the text, *I Once Was Lost*. I facilitated a group life coaching session on building trust in relationships. Participants practiced building trust through using active listening skills and powerful questioning both with a partner and the group.

I conducted a short lecture on culture and provided a worksheet on Performing a Cultural Exegesis.¹⁶⁷ I followed the lecture with a discussion about Emerging Adult culture. I facilitated a discussion about the importance of cultural fluency and outreach efforts. Participants began a cultural exegesis of their respective church cultures and evaluated current outreach strategies. I assigned an observation of Emerging Adult culture and asked participants to continue building relationships with the Emerging Adults within their spheres of influence. I assigned reading the text through chapter five and a RJAF to

¹⁶⁴See Appendix 9, 129.

¹⁶⁵See Appendix 10, 130.

¹⁶⁶See Appendix 11, 131.

¹⁶⁷See Appendix 12, 132.

be completed prior to the next session. I closed this session in prayer and completed a GOF.

The fourth session focused on the Gospel and incarnate living. I opened the fourth session with prayer and completed a quick review of session three content. I conducted a discussion of the homework assignments. I then held a short lecture and discussion on faith thresholds two and three from the text. Participants took part in a role play activity practicing active listening skills and asking powerful questions. I delivered a lecture based on Jeff Vanderstelt's text, *Gospel Fluency*.¹⁶⁸ The participants engaged in the group activity creating Gospel Squares. Participants were asked to draw their personal journey to Christ and then share the drawing with the group.

I facilitated a group life coaching session on the impact of the Gospel and incarnate living. I assigned the "Who Am I In Christ?" handout,¹⁶⁹ the Gospel Fluency Assessment (GFA),¹⁷⁰ and the RJAF to be completed prior to the next session. The participants were asked to begin evaluating the faith thresholds of the Emerging Adults within their spheres of influence using the Faith Thresholds Evaluation Form (FTEF).¹⁷¹ Finally, I assigned reading chapters six and seven in the text and closed the session in prayer. I completed a GOF.

The fifth session was rescheduled to a new room within CHPC due to unforeseen conflicts with the Prayer Chapel. I contacted Julie Hardin about the room conflict and she was able to resolve it. However, this caused a delay in the training course schedule for one

¹⁶⁸ Vanderstelt, Jeff. *Gospel Fluency: Speaking the Truths of Jesus Into Everyday Stuff of Life*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017.

¹⁶⁹ See Appendix 13, 133.

¹⁷⁰ See Appendix 14, 134.

¹⁷¹ See Appendix 15, 137.

week. My participants were all contacted with the change and the fifth session took place on Wednesday, November 8, 2017 and was in Room 208 of CHPC.

The fifth session focused on defining faith thresholds and creating action steps. I opened the fifth session with prayer and completed a quick review of the session four content. I also conducted a discussion on the homework assignments. The warm-up activity allowed the participants to share openly about their findings in the GFA as well as personal reflection from the “Who Am I in Christ?” handout.

I held a short lecture on joining others on their journey to faith. I then facilitated a group life coaching session evaluating existing relationships with Emerging Adults in terms of faith thresholds. The group assisted one another in creating next steps for outreach within each relationship. I provided participants with practical tools for sharing the Gospel.

I held a short Bible study on the Romans Road¹⁷² (Romans 3:23, 3:10, 5:12, 6:23, 5:8, 10:9-10, and 10:13) and how to communicate Biblical truths to Emerging Adults. Participants were given the opportunity to practice sharing the Romans Road with one another. I assigned Creating a Context-Specific, Culturally Sensitive Plan for Engaging Emerging Adults Within the Community using the Final Project Instructions¹⁷³ as homework for the final session. I closed the session in prayer and completed the Group Observation Form.

The sixth session focused on being missional, relational, and incarnational. I opened the session with prayer and presented a summary lecture of the course material and objectives. Participants engaged in a role play activity integrating faith threshold

¹⁷²See Appendix 16, 140.

¹⁷³See Appendix 17, 141.

identification, creating next steps, and personal stories. The participants created a context-specific, culturally sensitive implementation plan together as a group. Each participant presented a portion of the implementation plan. I administered the EAKT and provided a link via email to complete the Course Evaluation Form (CEF)¹⁷⁴ before November 21, 2017. I conducted a debrief on the project, closed the session in prayer, and completed a GOF. All four participants completed the CEF anonymously via the link provided by November 17, 2017.

After completing the six training sessions, I offered three voluntary, weekly Implementation Support Groups (ISG) for the participants as they enacted changes and to Emerging Adult relationships within their spheres of influence. I sent a text message to the participants to remind them two days prior to each ISG. The meetings were an open format. I facilitated the ISG by utilizing the coach approach. The group sought to explore challenges and celebrate successes with one another as they worked toward a common goal of outreach. I felt it was necessary to support projected changes, offer expertise, and encourage participants as they utilized new outreach strategies.

The first ISG was held on November 22, 2017. One participant attended. I prayed prior to beginning the group. The participant shared his excitement and success in his communication efforts. Topics discussed were the difficulties parenting an almost 18-year-old daughter that was not making healthy choices and how to communicate the Gospel through incarnate living. The participant agreed that the next ISG would be on November 29, 2017 from 6:00 P.M. through 8:00 P.M. I closed the session with prayer and completed a GOF.

¹⁷⁴See Appendix 18, 142.

Four participants attended the ISG on November 29, 2017. I prayed before beginning the group. Two participants shared that they had been working on outreach with co-workers but had run into challenges asking powerful questions. Topics discussed were asking powerful questions and active listening skills. The group agreed to attend the final ISG on December 5, 2017. I closed in prayer and completed a GOF.

Four participants attended the final ISG on December 5, 2017. I prayed before beginning the group. The participants shared successes they had communicating with Emerging Adults within their spheres of influence. Topics discussed were the faith thresholds and action steps to move Emerging Adults through each threshold. The participants were given a list of additional resources. I informed the participants they could continue to contact me via email, phone, text or social media if they needed additional support or had further questions. I closed the session with prayer and completed the GOF.

Following the three weeks of ISG sessions I began compiling and organizing the data collected during the project. Once the data was compiled, I interpreted the data and wrote the final Doctor of Strategic Leadership Project Report.

CHAPTER 7

ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION OF PROJECT DATA

Evaluation and Assessment Tools

I anticipated the evaluation process to be one of the most challenging portions of the project. One element that made this portion difficult is that much of the information recorded in the affective dimension was subjective. Subjective information can be burdensome to interpret as it can easily become skewed based on previous experiences as well as conscious and unconscious belief systems operating internally during project participation. I conducted outcome-based evaluations of both the participants and myself. I assessed the overall effectiveness of the project by evaluating the implementation and training processes in relation to the overall project results.

To evaluate the cognitive objective for participants, I utilized Emerging Adult Knowledge Test (EAKT) to determine if the participants could identify correctly developmental traits unique to the Emerging Adult population. Information was gathered from the Reflective Journaling Activity Form (RJAF), observations, group sharing, and role play activities. These served to evaluate the participants' understanding and integration of new concepts to relationships with Emerging Adults. The EAKT and the Evaluation of Outreach Practices Form (EOPF), were all used to evaluate the effectiveness of current evangelism strategies and the application of new techniques. These tools adequately produced a baseline understanding of the participants knowledge and reflected growth throughout the project.

To evaluate the affective objective for participants, I utilized the responses from the EAKT, class participation, and the Group Observation Form (GOF) to identify personal biases that hinder current outreach efforts. I evaluated participants' willingness to listen respectfully to emerging adults by using the GOF, RJAF, as well as group and role play activities. I evaluated the participants' openness to responding to teaching concepts by recording class attendance, group activity participation and engagement, as well as the completion of the weekly RJAF. I evaluated the participants' ability to demonstrate appreciation for Emerging Adult differences with RJAF. These journaling activities demonstrated the participants' willingness to initiate new relationships and engage in spiritual exploration with Emerging Adults. By evaluating these components, I established baseline thought processes and sited evidence of growth and change in these areas.

To evaluate the skill-based objective for participants I utilized role play activities, the GOF, and the RJAF to assess the following: (1) the use of active listening skills; (2) the use of communication skills to optimize learning opportunities contained within events and experiences among Emerging Adults; (3) the creation and use of liminal spaces. Utilizing the GOF, role play, and the RJAF, I evaluated the following: the participants' communication of and use of personal story as part of the relationship-building process; the participants' abilities to create a context-specific, culturally sensitive implementation plan to integrate new strategies for engaging Emerging Adults in each respective church. Each of these elements provided a concrete measure of skill acquisition for the project.

In evaluating personal objectives for the project, I relied on the process of research and design, implementation and supervision, as well as evaluation and interpretation of the project. The clarification of my theological and theoretical views occurred primarily

during the writing and research process for the prospectus and the project report. I demonstrated my ability to teach a diverse group of church outreach leaders by including an appendix containing teaching notes¹⁷⁵ for the project training course. I had the participants evaluate my teaching skills and style at the end of the training. This was conducted by anonymous survey. In addition, I reviewed and integrated my personal growth process, as recorded in my weekly project journaling, into the concluding remarks of the project report. Overall, these elements clearly demonstrated my personal growth both in the cognitive and the skill-based dimensions of the project.

Analysis and Evaluation of Participants' Data

The initial section of this analysis provides general information regarding the participants. The remainder of this portion consists of utilizing the project objectives as a parallel structure for analysis and evaluation of the project data.

To prevent identification of the project participants, I have randomly designated the three female and two male participants as P1 through P5. All participants were Christians with a passion for evangelism and attended Chapel Hill Presbyterian Church (CHPC), Gig Harbor, Washington. One enrolled to prepare for a mission trip, three for educational purposes, and one for personal growth. Two participants indicated previous training in evangelism strategies.

The cognitive objective was for the participants to evidence greater understanding of the Emerging Adult developmental stage. P1, P3, P4, and P5 all demonstrated a clear understanding of the Emerging Adult developmental stage by showing an increase in their respective scores for the EAKT.

¹⁷⁵ See Appendix 19, 144.

The following table depicts each participant's scores for correct responses out of 10 possible questions on the EAKT:

Table 1. Analysis of Emerging Adult Knowledge Test

Participant	Pre-Test Score	Post-Test Score	Change
P1	7/10	9/10	Increase of 2
P2	5/10	N/A	N/A
P3	6/10	9/10	Increase of 3
P4	7/10	10/10	Increase of 3
P5	6/10	8/10	Increase of 2

The EAKT demonstrated that P1, P3, P4, and P5 increased in basic knowledge of Emerging Adult developmental traits. P2 did not have a value for the post-test due to attending only sessions one and two and the EAKT was administered during sessions one and six.

Identifying Emerging Adult developmental traits was a strong indicator of change for the cognitive goal. According to the Pre-Test results, P1 and P4 had some basic knowledge of the developmental stage of the Emerging Adult; P2, P3, and P5 had limited knowledge of the developmental stage. P1 and P4 self-identified as part of the Emerging Adult population; P2 and P3 self-identified as part of the Boomer population; and P5 self-identified as part of the Generation X population. Change in knowledge seemed to be similar among the varied generation, demonstrating that the training course was applicable to a broad spectrum of candidates.

Demonstrating understanding by applying new concepts to new and existing relationships was also a moderate indicator of change for the cognitive goal. All five participants stated they had existing relationships with Emerging Adults with whom to

begin applying new concepts. All five participants additionally stated they had additional Emerging Adults available with whom to establish new relationships. The following table demonstrates the number of reported Emerging Adult relationships, both existing and newly initiated, throughout the course of the six sessions:

Table 2. Existing Emerging Adult Relationships

	Existing Relationships (Session 1)	Newly Initiated Relationships (Session 6)	Change
P1	1	4	3
P2	2	N/A	N/A
P3	2	5	3
P4	5	10	5
P5	1	3	2

The greatest increase in building relationships was shown by P4. P4 had a greater sphere of influence due to attending college and living on campus. However, each of the other participants demonstrated an increase in the number of intentional relationships, demonstrating a willingness to build relationships with Emerging Adults among all participants. This was a good indicator of the cognitive goal.

Evaluating outcomes from current evangelism practices was the weakest indicator of change for the cognitive goal. The EAKT did not provide a thorough evaluation of current CHPC evangelism practices. P2 and P4 were able to more correctly identify and evaluate the current forms of evangelism being used at CHPC. P2 stated they had recently finished an outreach class and that provided the background needed to give a general evaluation of current outreach practices. P4 stated they were part of a small group of

young people learning how to share their faith and thus, have evaluated CHPC's current outreach strategies for effectiveness.

The participants discussed their knowledge and growth during the course debrief of session six. P1 stated, "I feel better prepared to interact with Emerging Adults after completing this course." P5 stated, "I am more confident interacting with my adult children." Overall, the group stated that they felt better equipped to communicate with Emerging Adults based on the knowledge they gained through the training course.

Overall, I found sufficient demonstrable change to support a claim that the cognitive objective. This was indicated by substantive achievement of the first two criteria as well as adequate support for the third claim. The third criterion would possibly be stronger with improvement and use of better quantitative questions.

For the affective objective, the selected outreach leaders were to evidence openness in expressing personal growth and cultural fluency concerning Emerging Adults. To evaluate the success of this objective, I used the information gained from the first session one group coaching session to establish participants' baseline biases. Additionally, in order to delve deeper into the affective perspectives of the participants, I utilized reported behaviors and biases expressed during subsequent group coaching sessions and from homework assignments to evaluate changes from baseline biases and substantiate participants' personal growth and cultural fluency. At the end of each session and Implementation Support Group (ISG) I completed the GOF.

In identifying personal biases that hinder current outreach efforts to Emerging Adults, I utilized more actively affect-related scores of the questions embedded within the EAKT. P2, P3, and P5 indicated a strong bias against Emerging Adults based on their answer to the question, "How do you feel towards the current generation the

‘Millennials’?” P2, P3, and P5 expressed their feelings with derogatory terms such as “spoiled,” “entitled,” and “lazy.” The same participants indicated less bias throughout subsequent coaching sessions using positive connotating words such as “creative,” “educated,” and “authentic” when sharing about newly initiated relationships with Emerging Adults. This was further substantiated with sharing homework assignments, which also indicated a favorable change denoted by a decrease in group bias as knowledge of the Emerging Adult developmental stage increased. The group expressed an affinity towards this specific group of young people.

Participants’ biases were additionally defined using the Inventory of Spiritual/ Emotional Maturity (ISEM).¹⁷⁶ The following table indicates the participants’ scores for the ISEM:

Table 3. Inventory of Spiritual/ Emotional Maturity Participants’ Scores

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	Mean
General Formation and Discipleship	20/28	22/28	20/28	19/28	15/28	19.2
Principle 1	20/24	18/24	17/24	20/24	13/24	17.6
Principle 2	20/24	21/24	16/24	20/24	20/24	19.4
Principle 3	22/28	17/28	24/28	24/28	18/28	21
Principle 4	15/24	16/24	18/24	20/24	14/24	16.6
Principle 5	20/20	19/20	14/20	18/20	18/20	17.8
Principle 6	33/40	28/40	35/40	26/40	25/40	29.4

The scores from the ISEM demonstrate a likely relationship between emotional maturity and spiritual maturity. The mean of the participants’ scores was used to establish a group baseline for both emotional and spiritual maturity. Three of the seven ISEM divisions were scrutinized: General Formation and Leadership; Principle 3, Live in

¹⁷⁶ See Appendix 2, 112.

Brokenness and Vulnerability; and Principle 6, Make Incarnation Your Model for Loving Well. The mean of the participants' scores for General Formation and Discipleship, was 19.2, indicating the group was predominantly "Emotional Adolescents," each having moderate difficulty empathizing with others. The mean for Principle 3 was a score of 21, indicating the group was composed primarily of "Emotional Adolescents" regarding humility towards others. The mean for Principle 6 was 29.4, falling on the threshold between "Emotional Adolescents" and "Emotional Adults." This indicated a general group propensity towards utilizing incarnate, biblical principles as the primary way to communicate care and concern to others, which indicated a shift towards being Emotional Adults. However, the group was not primarily utilizing these skills on a regular basis which indicated they still possess Emotional Adolescent tendencies.

The ISEM was completed during session two. The participants' shared points of emotional weakness from the ISEM. P5 stated, "The inventory was a real eye opener for me. I didn't realize how immature in certain areas I have been. I guess I always thought God would use me when He was ready. I am not one to be vulnerable in front of others, but I know I need to be more now. I also didn't realize how insecure I have been in my faith until now." In subsequent groups, elements of both emotional and spiritual immaturity were discussed. During the course debrief in session six, P1 stated, "The biggest area I think I have grown in has been though not being so selective of who I share the Gospel with. I am more open to sharing my subjective experiences where God has really shown up as a means of talking to people. I actually think about how to connect my story to theirs." P5 stated, "I have learned how be vulnerable and share with my daughter in everyday stuff that God is working on with me." P4 stated, "I have become more intentional in who I interact with. I have let go of my preconceived notions about others

and just started letting God show me who I should interact with next. The change has been phenomenal, and I am excited by how God has been using me.”

Participation in group coaching sessions was optional because of the sensitivity of group topics. However, all attending participants fully engaged in the six group coaching sessions. I considered a 75% or greater participation in group coaching sessions a strong indicator of participants’ openness to express personal growth and cultural fluency. The participation percentage is based upon having the participants attend and participate in the group coaching sessions. The following table indicates percentage of participants who participated in group coaching in relation to those enrolled and attending the sessions:

Table 4. Participant Attendance and Group Coaching Participation Percentages

Type of Session	Total Enrolled	Participants Attending	Group Process Participation	Percentage
Session 1	5	4	4	100%
Session 2	5	4	4	100%
Session 3	5	4	4	100%
Session 4	5	3	3	100%
Session 5	5	2	2	100%
Session 6	5	4	4	100%
ISG 1	N/A	1	1	100%
ISG 2	N/A	4	4	100%
ISG 3	N/A	4	4	100%

With all attending participants interacting throughout the group coaching process, it demonstrated that the all the participants were willing to express their personal growth and cultural fluency. The group coaching sessions consisted of opportunities to share: insights from homework assignments, experiences from interacting with Emerging Adults,

areas of struggle to connect culturally with Emerging Adults, and elements for reflection throughout the training course.

Participation in the ISG was voluntary and there were no attendance expectations established. It appears that participants desired additional support as they continued to work on implementing new strategies into relationships. The trend from sessions one through six continued, as all the attending participants participated in group coaching sessions. I believe this demonstrates the groups' cohesive nature, willingness to share with one another, and reflects personal growth.

Homework completion percentages were a moderate indicator of overcoming biases about Emerging Adults. This was evidenced primarily in the completion of a weekly RJAF. The journal insights were shared during group coaching sessions, and I recorded general group insights in a weekly GOF. The following table demonstrates the participant attendance and homework completion percentages:

Table 5. Participant Attendance and Homework Completion Percentages

Session Number	Number of Participants Attending	Homework Completion Percentages
1	4	N/A
2	4	75%
3	4	100%
4	3	100%
5	2	50%
6	4	75%

I considered a 75% or greater percentage of homework completion to demonstrate adequately all four of the affective indicators. All sessions, except for number five, had a completion percentage of 75% or greater. Session five had a 50% homework completion

percentage. Due to an automobile accident, session five attendance decreased by two participants. Although not reflected in the percentages, the non-attending participants stated that they had completed the homework assignments and were prepared to share the assignment with the group during session six.

In addition to sharing during group coaching sessions and homework completion, another strong indicator of demonstrating: (1) a willingness to listen respectfully to Emerging Adults, (2) show appreciation for Emerging Adults' developmental differences, and (3) responding openly to teaching concepts with the use of the RJAF. The following table depicts the number of new interactions with Emerging Adults during the six sessions and the ISG:

Table 6. New Interactions with Emerging Adults

Type of Session	Number of New Interactions Reported
Session 1	N/A
Session 2	3
Session 3	4
Session 4	4
Session 5	1
Session 6	2
ISG 1	1
ISG 2	2
ISG 3	4

During session three, P4 shared about the number of new interactions encountered. P4 stated, "I have stepped outside of my comfort zone and intentionally started interacting with other students in my dorm. When I do, I find that God shows up and something amazing comes from it. Understanding the culture of the dorm and the Emerging Adults there has helped me see needs where I didn't see them before." P1 shared that

understanding the culture of the people helped build connections and initiate new relationships. P1 stated, “I began to realize that I needed to invest in relationships with people I interact with daily, especially those that are getting ready to go off to college. As I have started to understand the students’ culture, I have started to see new ways to connect my story to theirs. It has made a big difference in how I feel about the slightly younger generation.”

The participants’ consistent interaction with Emerging Adults throughout the course of sessions two through six shows not only an openness to the teaching concepts but also a willingness to overcome personal biases identified in the primary session. A continuation to interact with Emerging Adults beyond the six required sessions demonstrated personal growth and substantiated cultural fluency. P5 stated, “I have learned how to understand my adult children and appreciate their generational differences. I feel like I have hope to reconnect with my kids that I have never really understood.”

The participants actively shared their values and feelings through the group sessions and beyond at the ISG. Based on the qualitative data recorded about personal biases and responding to teaching concepts, as well as the quantitative data from group participation, homework completion, and newly initiated relationships, I would conclude that all four affective objectives were sufficiently met and show demonstrable change.

The skill-based objective was for the selected outreach leaders would show improvement in communication skills, exhibited by: using active listening skills; communicating with Emerging Adults during teachable moments; creating liminal spaces that allow for questions and exploration; using their personal story as part of the relationship-building process; and creating a context-specific, culturally sensitive implementation plan to assimilate new strategies to engage with Emerging Adults. The

participants were evaluated initially for specific knowledge and skill about sharing the Gospel. The results from this assessment were useful in establishing baseline knowledge and skill with specific regard to sharing the Gospel. The following table depicts the participants' Gospel Fluency Assessment (GFA) scores:

Table 7. Participants' Gospel Fluency Assessment Scores

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5
Knowledge	32/60	N/A	36/60	29/60	40/60
Application	28/60	N/A	44/60	28/60	29/60
Sharing	45/60	N/A	42/60	37/60	31/60

Interestingly, knowledge of the Gospel did not necessarily translate to sharing the Gospel with others. In fact, as the scores for P1, P3, and P4 demonstrate, the participant scored higher in using the skills to share the Gospel than in the knowledge of the components of it. Conversely, P5 scored higher in knowledge of the components than in sharing the Gospel. I expected the results for this assessment to be like P5's scores for all participants. This is, perhaps, because P1, P3, and P4 stated that they feel as though they are called to share the Gospel, and regularly do so. P5 stated that they did not necessarily feel called to share the Gospel in every situation but felt as though they knew enough about it to do so. However, it seems that enhancing their skills to share the Gospel included knowing and understanding the components of the Gospel itself.

At the end of the sixth session, P1, P3, P4, and P5 all stated that they feel like they were "better equipped" to share the Gospel because of the sessions. The participants also showed a proficiency in utilizing their personal story through group activity participation and sharing. The four participants, who completed the training, stated that the skills of active listening, creating liminal space, and using their personal stories were the most

important skills they had acquired which enhanced their ability to share the Gospel with Emerging Adults. The following table depicts the participants' response to skill-related statements on the Course Evaluation Form:

Table 8. Participants' Skill Building and Utilization

Skill	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5
Use of Active Listening	Agree	N/A	Agree	Agree	Agree
Use of Teachable Moments	Disagree	N/A	Agree	Agree	Agree
Creation of Liminal Space	Agree	N/A	Agree	Agree	Agree
Use of Personal Story	Agree	N/A	Agree	Agree	Agree
Creation of Implementation Plan	Agree	N/A	Agree	Agree	Agree

The participants expressed intent to continue utilizing the skills beyond the final session, as evidenced by their participation in the ISG and reports of new interactions with Emerging Adults, as previously seen in tables four and six. P3, P4, and P5 reported using the evaluated skills throughout the sessions. P1 reported using all the skills except for the "Use of Teachable Moments." When asked about this skill, P1 stated that they were unclear about when to use the teachable moments in conversation. When asked what might have helped, P1 stated that more examples of teachable moments during role play would be helpful.

Based on the answers provided in the CEF to the skill-based statements about the creation of an Implementation Plan, all of the participants indicated they had acquired the skills necessary to create a context-specific, culturally-sensitive implementation plan to assimilate new strategies and techniques to engage with the Emerging Adult Population. This was evidenced by the collaborative creation and presentation of the afore said plan during the final session.

I utilized the data from the GOF, which detailed the participants' skills used during the sessions, and the quantitative data from the course evaluation, which could have been stronger. I concluded there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate applicable learning of communication skills.

Analysis and Evaluation of Personal Data

The analysis of my personal growth is mainly subjective in nature rather than being objective and quantitative. Although I critically address my personal ideas and growth throughout the project, I have chosen to use minimal footnotes throughout this section of the project report.

In demonstrating personal growth, I had two main objectives. For the cognitive objective, I used the following criteria to assess my growth: (1) the use of the exegetical process to select Bible verses providing guidance in evangelism and the importance of contextualization for evangelism, (2) conducting thorough research to explore my topic in depth, (3) writing clear and concise theological and theoretical portions for this project and, (4) integrating my knowledge and positions into the curriculum of the project. The next portion of this report provides a summary of my personal growth regarding the cognitive objective.

Through the research of this project, I have come to understand fully the need and importance of missional, relational, and incarnational ministry. Following three years of diligent research reading for this project, I gained a preponderant understanding of the depth and breadth of the foundational elements of Emerging Adult culture and the evangelism process. Because there was so much information available, I quickly became aware of the need to narrow down my quest to develop fully my theoretical

presuppositions, and concurrently, my theological rationales. Throughout my research process, my Doctoral Support Committee (DSC) proved invaluable in helping me stay focused, intentional, and communicate as clearly and concisely as possible.

Over a three-year-period, I reviewed numerous research articles and resources about Emerging Adulthood and evangelism. After this review, I discovered a rising trend among Christian scholars and leading evangelists concerning the verses Matthew 28:19-20. I found that these scholars and evangelists were interpreting these verses as commands to go out from the church to proclaim the Gospel, rather than waiting for people to come to the church. This is contrary to the widely-held attractional model many churches in America hold currently. However, the missional model for outreach is gaining momentum among smaller churches and not for increasing attendance numbers. Because of this research, I came to a place of greater understanding of God's call to "go and make disciples" as the verses in Matthew purport. I made a shift in my thinking concerning evangelism strategies on a personal level, embracing a more missional approach to life. In addition, I gained a greater vision for the mission of the church.

Before I could conduct my research on human relationships, I needed to more clearly understand God, as the author of humanity, as humanity was created in the image of a Triune God. To examine critically the concept of a relational, Triune God, I had to examine my own understanding of the Trinity. This concept has always been a difficult one for me to fathom. However, with the help of the Holy Spirit, I found a more definitive personal understanding. I first examined scripture and then commentary by both Wayne Grudem and Norman Geisler. This was crucial to developing my first theological rationale, God created humans for relationships. I had to first understand God's individual, yet intertwined personalities. Ultimately, I was able to apply my expository study of Gen.

1:1-2, Gen. 1:26-28, and Luke 3:21-22 to more than just individuals. I was able to see a greater value in all humanity, “Every human being, no matter how much the image of God is marred by sin, or illness, or weakness, or age, or any other disability, still has the status of being in God’s image and therefore must be treated with the dignity and respect that is due to God’s image-bearer.”¹⁷⁷ This revelation deepened my understanding of and compassion for those marginalized by society, such as Emerging Adults. Understanding a Triune God at His relational core helped me to appreciate the importance of outreach leaders being relational while sharing the Gospel.

Prior to the project, I mostly still held the view that missions are directed from higher up within the church. I also believed that the church decided who got to “go” on mission based on spiritual maturity and financial ability. I quickly changed this view as I began to explore many of the works by Alan Hirsche, Lance Ford, Jeff Vanderstelt, and many others. I came to the consensus that every believer is called to “go” on mission, no matter where they are, within the spheres of influence that God has placed them.

“Sphere of influence” was a new concept to me at this point in time. In October 2016, I attend the Faith at Work conference in Dallas, Texas. I was exposed to many new researchers, writers, fellow believers in Christ, and movement pioneers that clearly held the belief that work was a God-given platform, a sphere of influence, within which each person is called to minister to others. I had also attended the Saturate Conference in Bellevue, Washington earlier the same month. Between these two important conferences, I gained insight into relationships as the medium through which to share the Gospel in the natural rhythms of life.

¹⁷⁷ Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994. 450.

One of the members of my DSC suggested I meet with a man from CHPC named Shane Hansen. He was the adult mentor and leader for a group of young people called, “Nomads.” Nomads is a student-initiated, outreach ministry outside the traditional walls of CHPC that equips students to share their faith with their peers. I spoke with Shane Hansen and began to further develop the concept “spheres of influence” based on the exposition of 2 Corinthians 10:13-16. Mr. Hansen provided clarity and guidance as I learned the outreach process within which these students had immersed themselves. I joined Mr. Hansen in ministry; and as the project progressed I chose to incorporate him into my DSC as an expert in Emerging Adult outreach strategies.

At the suggestion of Dr. Matthew Edwards, a local pastor and spiritual advisor for my project, I discovered one of the most influential texts of my project, *So Beautiful*, by Leonard Sweet.¹⁷⁸ It was this text that provided the structure for my theological rationales and for the project itself. Through reading this rich, theological text, I discovered that I had outgrown the attractional model of outreach and now embraced a missional, relational, and incarnational model. I had not realized how crucially intertwined the three concepts were. I had read article upon article supporting missional outreach. I had also read a plethora of articles about friendship or relational evangelism. Literary articles about incarnational living, other than by overseas missionaries, were difficult to locate within my given timeframe. However, I found few articles that incorporated the three concepts. It was at this point that I decided to create a training for local outreach leaders that would address all three elements as the heart of the project, Sweet’s Missional, Relational, and Incarnational (MRI) Model.

¹⁷⁸ Sweet, Leonard. *So Beautiful*. Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2009.

The theoretical portion of the project was easier for me to articulate, as I have been practicing in the counseling field for more than nine years. I am familiar with Erickson's stages of human development. It was natural to incorporate my professional experience and personal knowledge of Erickson's theory into the project and subsequent report regarding Emerging Adulthood. I examined critically the most recent research by Dr. Jeffrey Arnett, which has established the existence of a new developmental stage for 18-to-25-year-old young adults. I was skeptical at first as I began to explore this possibility. The more research I read, the more convinced I became this stage truly did exist.

While presenting the information on Emerging Adulthood for my training sessions, P4 posed the question regarding the Emerging Adult developmental stage: "What if these experiences and traits of the Emerging Adult was what defined being an adult?" The question surfaced as the adult participants expressed that they too, continued to experience the same traits and milestones of Emerging Adults, throughout many stages of their adult life. To me, this was a completely new perspective that challenged my research and knowledge of the subject. I intend to explore this question further upon completion of this project report.

Regarding developmental stages, I found it intriguing to also examine the developmental milestones of Jesus Christ through the lens of the Jewish faith. I came to understand more fully the divinity of Christ because of this process. I also learned about the Jewish culture and customs which, enriched my expository studies. It provided me a framework to live intentionally as Christ did with every word He spoke and every incarnate interaction.

I have been fascinated by culture, that which distinguishes one group of individuals from another, and how it impacts relationships between individuals. The

Emerging Adult culture is no exception. I began to see the Emerging Adult culture as quite distinct from any other I have explored. I embarked initially on this journey towards my doctoral research project because I lacked significant, influential relationships with my grown children. I wanted to connect with them and have a more meaningful and significant impact on their spiritual life journey. Through diligent quantitative and qualitative research, I began to understand more about their culture and slowly began to reconnect individually with my adult children. Dr. Jeffrey Arnett's research was paramount in my learning process. I was able to clearly see values important to my children and engage them in more meaningful conversation. I learned how to enter their life journeys and utilize my personal faith experiences to communicate the Gospel to them. I continue to learn more each day as I pursue relationships with them.

I believe that culture is one of the keys to understanding the 18-to-25-year-old Emerging Adult. Being able to communicate Emerging Adult culture during the training sessions was crucial to the success of the project itself. However, as previously stated, the concepts cannot stand alone. They must be utilized in conjunction with one another for ultimate effectiveness.

Over the course of the past three years, I interacted with multiple cultures from a student's perspective rather than an expert perspective. My goal was to learn as much as possible through diverse cultures and apply it to this project. Two specific experiences that contributed directly to the design of this project: January 2017, I traveled to Arizona State University for a mission trip and interacted with Emerging Adults on campus; August 2017, I traveled to Vietnam for my son's and daughter-in-law's wedding where I interacted with a foreign culture I knew very little about.

In approaching each new culture as a student rather than an expert, I was able to learn far more about each culture and how to communicate the Gospel and witness the impact of incarnate living with a different culture. Even in situations where there was a significant language barrier, as in Vietnam, I was able to communicate the love of God to the people in a tangible way that was noticed as “different,” “warm,” and “welcoming.” I applied my research to each of these cultural settings and people took notice of what was different. Darrell L. Whiteman’s states that contextualization may present Christianity in a way that “meets people’s deepest needs and penetrates their worldviews.”¹⁷⁹ I experienced this first-hand both at Arizona State University and in Vietnam.

These experiences proved to be valuable personal teaching examples during the training sessions. I discovered teaching is more powerful when you have personal examples from which to draw. I found the same to be true when speaking to individuals within my spheres of influence. Personal examples of God’s reality in my life seemed to have more impact on my peers than simple stories out of the Bible. These examples created tangible experiences of God. Likewise, in the training, the concepts were easier for the participants to understand and apply to their own experiences.

I consider myself a natural in building rapport and relationships. Consequently, the portions of both writing the report and designing the training flowed from years of professional counseling experience and personal strengths. However, I did not expect that this to be the most difficult concept to communicate in the training. Based on my project results, I believe I was successful in communicating the topic both clearly and concisely. However, I struggled to recognize the limitations of each participant to building

¹⁷⁹ Whiteman, Darrell. “Contextualization: The Theory, the Gap, the Challenge.” Accessed 13 May 2017. <http://spu.edu/temp/denuol/context.htm>.

relationships. I presume this is a natural consequence of my possessing a strength that is not necessarily a given participant's (P5) strength. I found that the skill could be taught easily, but P5 struggled with motivation to use the skill. I had to adjust my teaching of this topic to include motivation and inspiration, as the skill teaching was not enough.

With regard to the skill-building objective, I evaluated my success on the following criteria: (1) designing a curriculum with lesson plans which included creative teaching methods to accommodate the learning needs of the participants of the class; (2) reviewing and incorporating the selected materials based on relevant Biblical principles, communication techniques, and relationship-building strategies specific to Emerging Adults; and (3) utilizing and modeling the coach approach to create a classroom environment for content rich learning and discovery. The next portion of this report provides a summary of my personal growth regarding the skill-based objective.

Two areas that helped me with my third theoretical presupposition were my experiences in professional counseling and life coaching. Both proved to be reliable sources to draw from in designing the training curriculum and presenting the material. As an introvert, I prefer to teach individually or in small groups of two to three individuals. I discovered that I lacked confidence in my presentation skills as a result. My confidence grew as I presented each week, and I found that I became confident in my ability to communicate the teaching concepts in a manner the participants could easily comprehend.

Life coaching has been a natural fit with my counseling experience as many basic constructs overlap between the two. When I decided to start my journey towards my doctoral degree, I did not comprehend how my life coaching experience was going to be utilized. However, God was faithful in helping me to devise a project that incorporated my training, knowledge, strengths, and natural aptitudes. I used the International Coaching

Federation website¹⁸⁰ to provide me with the principles of life coaching to guide me as I prepared the training and conducted group coaching sessions. Most of the teaching format utilized the coach approach, rather than pure coaching strategies. I was able to demonstrate my mastery of the discipline through the six sessions, building on the preceding sessions, working towards an overarching goal for the group. This proved to be an exceptionally effective form of communicating and modeling of the techniques for the participants.

My research of generational differences also helped me develop a curriculum that was suitable for a diverse audience. It also aided my preparation to interact with the group of chosen participants. One of my goals was to design a curriculum with lesson plans utilizing creative teaching methods to accommodate the learning needs of the participants in the class. I found that generational knowledge was one of the key elements needed. I selected the primary text, *I Once Was Lost*,¹⁸¹ because it had a variety of learning platforms built into it as well as being designed to share the Gospel with the Emerging Adult. The text was specifically designed for outreach leaders to learn how to best engage with young people and share the Gospel. I found the basic principles to be applicable to all generations and beneficial for all age groups.

Many times, throughout the process of both writing and presenting the training curriculum, I found myself adjusting to the participants. At first, this was a challenge for me. I found that I struggled with writing the curriculum but also in fortifying it with too much information. I found myself omitting information each week as I presented the assorted topics. I did, however, discover that I have an exceptional ability to adapt

¹⁸⁰ <https://coachfederation.org/>

¹⁸¹ Everts, Don and Doug Schaupp. *I Once Was Lost*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008.

spontaneously in teaching where I lacked concise content writing. This was a milestone of professional growth for me, as I have lead few trainings I have also designed.

I feel like I have grown in both awareness and prioritizing self-care because of completing this project. I have also come to understand that I must care for myself before I can work towards effective ministry with others. In fact, one of my life themes throughout the duration of this journey has been creating a work-home balance. I feel I have found a satisfying balance at this time of both with a healthy tension that holds the two in harmony.

The following table depicts the participants' evaluation of the facilitator, utilizing a scale one to ten, with one being very poor and ten being excellent. I have calculated the mean of the scores for the overall evaluation:

Table 9. Evaluation of the Facilitator

Evaluated Perception:	Mean of Participants' Scores
Knowledge of Material	9.75
Varied Teaching Methods	8.25
Clarity of Concepts	8.75
Personal Relevance	10
Group Coaching Experience	9.25

I considered a mean score of 8.5 or greater, reflecting 85 percent, as a measure of successful completion of each of the evaluated perceptions. According to the mean scores, I was successful in communicating my knowledge of the material, presenting the concepts clearly, creating a curriculum that had personal relevance, and creating a positive group coaching experience. The use of varied teaching methods was the lowest of the mean scores at 8.25. Although not above my personal goal of 8.5, I feel as though this score

demonstrates a place for continued growth as a professional. I found I did not thrive on creating the training as much as I did presenting it. I believe these scores reflect this personal insight and evaluation.

In examining my personal growth throughout the three-year process, I believe I successfully provided evidence on demonstrable personal change in both the cognitive and the skill-based objectives. I believe I have clearly defined my theoretical and theological positions by means of thorough research. I believe I have also adequately demonstrated my ability to teach a diverse group of church outreach leaders. One of the strengths I have discovered is the ability to thoroughly research a given topic. An area I will continue to pursue growth in is my ability to teach others. I believe I have a God-given talent to teach, but that the gift itself is not in the preparation of the teaching materials. In the future, I would prefer to teach a given curriculum rather than creating one. However, with this project there were no available curriculums that would accomplish the goals I had for the project. Perhaps, this project can serve as a pilot program for churches to reach a specific population more effectively.

Analysis and Evaluation of Project Data

In this section, I identify some general insights about the project. Additionally, I make suggestions for improvement of the project. I then present the indicators of change for ministry and offer several possible uses of this project.

Initially, I had expected ten to twelve participants for the project. I believed there would be greater interest in the content of the training primarily because CHPC has spent the greater part of the past year on outreach. The theme of this outreach effort has been, “Beyond These Walls.” I was concerned only five people agreed to attend all six sessions.

I did not feel this would be representative of the population of the church. Of these five, one dropped out after just two sessions due to the trainings not being a good fit for her learning style.

At first, I struggled with the small response for participation in the project. This demonstrated a clear bias on my part toward academic analysis. As the project progressed, I was able to determine the purpose of the project was about demonstrating change within a ministry, not drawing generalizations from project statistics. From my previous experience, small groups can be significantly productive due to building rapport quickly. With near immediate rapport among the participants, the group spent more time in deep discussion and collaboration than I originally anticipated. I was able to interact more intimately with the participants throughout the weekly sessions, providing a greater depth to the quality of responses I recorded. I was also able to model readily the behaviors I attempted to teach.

One area I was able to examine critically, based on the group size, was the response of the church to outreach training. I realized that the number of participants were, in fact, proportionate to the number of CHPC attendees that take the call of missions personally. This is not to say that there are many at CHPC that do not take missions seriously. I believe there are many who feel that missions are important and support outreach through prayer and finances. However, the difference is in the personal responsibility to serve those outside of the church through outreach, particularly the Emerging Adults where strong bias exists. CHPC outreach efforts continue to operate in an attractional model. I came to understand and embrace the project's example: Small, intimate groups produce healthy, intentional outreach leaders.

Throughout the six two-hour sessions, I found it difficult to spend sufficient time on applying new techniques. There was far too much information for each session to allow for optimal learning. During the course debrief, P4 and P5 stated that they would like to have had more time with practical skill use than lecturing, as that was their best learning format. All four participants agreed that the slides were helpful to remember concepts but would have liked to have more content specific handouts to follow along with each week. All four participants who completed the training suggested that the ISG continue indefinitely as a means for support, problem-solving, and encouragement. The participants agreed this was a valuable portion of the training.

One possible solution to the problem of too much information would be to reduce the amount being conveyed each week. However, I feel this would result in the participants' being inadequately equipped to minister to Emerging Adults. P5 suggested the course be extended by six weeks. P3 and P4 suggested the ISG continue indefinitely following the initial six weeks. I would suggest the content be presented in twelve two-hour sessions as opposed to the six training sessions to allow to convey adequately the content and to apply practical skills.

I believe there were two specific assessment tools that were incredibly helpful in obtaining the objectives for the project: The SEI and GFA. It was helpful to do the SEI at the beginning of the six sessions; however, I think it would have been more complete with scores from both sessions one and six to measure growth throughout the project. I believe the same to be true for the GFA. This too should have been completed during sessions one and six. Knowledge of the Gospel and application of it could have been assessed more accurately as a result.

One means of evaluation that could have enhanced data interpretation could have been having a third party to help evaluate the sessions. The original project design included recording the sessions and having a life coach critically assess the quality of the coaching sessions. This became unable to be accomplished due to space issues and limitations at the project site. Additionally, I would include the Associate Pastor of Evangelism, Ellis White, more in weekly sessions and in the final evaluation of the training. Both areas would have produced a project that had more validity and less bias on my part.

After conducting the project and analyzing the data, I thought of additional implications for this project. Since the project was able to span multiple generations, I believe the project would be beneficial for all church leadership to participate at some point in time. I believe the project is helpful in addressing biases created from a closed system within a church that prevents “out of the box” thinking and application. Christian churches are on the decline and unlikely to thrive with the use of traditional outreach methods. They must begin to leave the safety of the church walls and be willing to engage young people where they are in life. This cannot be effectively accomplished by simply inviting people to attend classes and fun activities.

Because the project is beneficial for all generations, I believe it can be adapted to create a model for outreach to all generations as well. The principles do not change. The culture of the target audience is all that would need to adapt. The tools utilized for this project could also be used for any age group. I have observed the success of the Nomads using the same principles with outreach efforts to their peers within their spheres of influence. If every Christian is called to “go” and share the Gospel, it is reasonable to have a standardized method that can train adequately every Christian. I believe this project has

that potential. I also believe this training is so critical to Christian living and should be included as a discipleship requirement in all churches, particularly those struggling to find successful outreach training.

Conclusion

An extremely important, overarching goal for this project was demonstrable change for the outreach leaders with regards to engaging with Emerging Adults. Based on all the data presented, I would conclude that this overarching goal was accomplished with the four participants who completed the training sessions. The participants' responses to questions on the CEF provided insight into the overall effectiveness of the project. P3 was undecided on having learned a lot. I believe this was due to P3's prior training they received outside of the church through Nomads and many of the concepts were reinforced rather than newly learned. P5 was undecided regarding feeling more confident sharing the Gospel with others. P5 stated this would be an ongoing place of growth due to this training being the first P5 had attended. All four participants agreed they: (1) felt more equipped to engage with Emerging Adults, (2) had a clearer understanding of God's missional call on their lives, (3) felt more equipped to build relationships, and (4) claimed to be a better Christian because of the project. The following table depicts the CEF responses that are indicative of change in participants' lives:

Table 10. Ministry Change Indicators

Change from Project	P1	P3	P4	P5
Learned a Lot	Agree	Agree	Undecided	Agree
More Equipped to Engage with Emerging Adults	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree

Change from Project	P1	P3	P4	P5
Clearer Understanding of Missional Call on My Life	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
Better Equipped to Build Relationships	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
Feel More Confident Sharing the Gospel with Others	Agree	Agree	Agree	Undecided
Become a Better Christian	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree

Overall, this research project served its stated purpose of equipping a selected group of outreach leaders to engage effectively Emerging Adults outside traditional church structure. Through this project, I have learned to be creative, intentional, and responsive in ministry to Emerging Adults. Additionally, I have shared in the process of producing spiritual growth and maturity in the lives of the participants.

APPENDIX 1

INITIAL SURVEY AND INFORMED CONSENT

1. Name (Last Name, First Name): _____
2. Email Address: _____
3. Contact Phone Number: _____
4. Social Media (Optional, for communication purposes):

5. Preferred Method of Contact:
Email: _____ Phone: _____ Text: _____ Social Media: _____
6. Church Affiliation:
CHPC: _____ Other: _____
7. How are you currently serving at your church?

8. What is the best way for you to learn?
_____ Visual (You prefer pictures, images, and spatial understanding)
_____ Aural (You prefer using sound and music)
_____ Verbal (You prefer using words, both in speech and writing)
_____ Physical (You prefer using your body, hands, and sense of touch)
_____ Logical/Mathematical (You prefer using logic, reasoning, and systems)
_____ Social (You prefer to learn in groups or with other people)
_____ Solidarity (You prefer to work alone and use self-study)
9. Do you know what your spiritual gifting is?
Yes _____ No _____ Unsure _____
10. If you answered “yes” to the above question, please describe your spiritual gifting:

11. What are you passionate about (What excites you and gives you energy)?

12. What would you like to gain by participating in this training?

13. **PARTICIPANT’S RIGHTS:** If you have read the informed consent (of which you have received a hard copy) and have decided to participate in this project, please understand your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. The alternative is to not participate. You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. The results of this research study may be presented at scientific or professional meetings or published in scientific journals. Should you, as a participant, desire emotional support related to this research study, please contact Pastor Ellis White for support through Chapel Hill Presbyterian Church.

_____ Yes, I choose to participate in this research study.

_____ No, I do not wish to participate in this research study.

14. By signing my name below, I certify that I am the individual that has completed this form and the information contained in this survey is true and correct.

Signature

Date

APPENDIX 2

INVENTORY OF SPIRITUAL/EMOTIONAL MATURITY

Inventory of Spiritual/Emotional Maturity

Please answer these questions as honestly as possible.

Use the following scoring method:

1 Not very true; **2** Sometimes true; **3** Mostly true; **4** Very true

PART A: General Formation and Leadership

1. _____ I feel confident of my adoption as God's son/daughter and rarely, if ever, question his acceptance of me
2. _____ I love to worship God by myself as well as with others.
3. _____ I spend quality, regular time in the Word of God and in prayer.
4. _____ I sense the unique ways God has gifted me individually and am actively using my spiritual gifts for his service.
5. _____ I am a vital participant in a community with other believers.
6. _____ It is clear that my money, gifts, time, and abilities are completely at God's disposal and not my own.
7. _____ I consistently integrate my faith in the marketplace and the world.
- _____ **Total**

PART B: Emotional Components of Discipleship

Principle 1: Look Beneath the Surface

1. _____ It's easy for me to identify what I am feeling inside (John 11:33-35; Luke 19:41-44).
2. _____ I am willing to explore previously unknown and unacceptable parts of myself, allowing Christ to more fully transform me (Rom. 7:21; Col. 3:5-17).
3. _____ I enjoy being alone in quiet reflection with God and myself (Mark 1:35; Luke 6:12).
4. _____ I can share freely about my emotions, sexuality, joy, and pain (Ps 22; Prov. 5:18-19; Luke 10:21).
5. _____ I am able to experience and deal with anger in a way that leads to growth in others and myself (Eph. 4:25-32).
6. _____ I am honest with myself (and a few significant others) about the feelings, beliefs, doubts, pains, and hurts beneath the surface of my life (Ps. 73; 88; Jer. 20:7-18).
- _____ **Total**

Principle 2: Break the Power of the Past

7. _____ I resolve conflict in a clear, direct, respectful way, not what I might have learned growing up in my family, such as painful putdowns, avoidance, escalating tensions, or going to a third party rather than to the person directly (Matt. 18:15-18).

8. _____ I'm intentional at working through the impact of significant "earthquake" events that shaped my present, such as death of a family member, an unexpected pregnancy, divorce, addiction, or major financial disaster (Gen. 5:20; Ps. 51).
9. _____ I am able to thank God for all my past life experiences, seeing how he used them to uniquely shape me into who I am (Gen 5:20; Rom. 8:28-30).
10. _____ I can see how "generational sins" have been passed down to me through my family history, including character flaws, lies, secrets, ways of coping with pain, and unhealthy tendencies in relating to others (Ex. 20:5; Gen. 20: 2; 26:7; 27:19; 37:1-33).
11. _____ I don't need approval from others to feel good about myself (Prov. 29:25; Gal. 1:10).
12. _____ I take responsibility and ownership for my past life rather than to blame others (John 5:5-7).
- _____ **Total**

Principle 3: Live in Brokenness and Vulnerability

13. _____ I often admit when I'm wrong, readily asking forgiveness from others (Matt. 5:23-24).
14. _____ I am able to speak freely about my weaknesses, failures, and mistakes (2 Cor. 12:7-12).
15. _____ Others would easily describe me as approachable, gentle, open, and transparent (Gal. 5:22-23; 1 Cor. 13:1-6).
16. _____ Those close to me would say that I am not easily offended or hurt (Matt. 5:39-42; 1 Cor. 13:5).
17. _____ I am consistently open to hearing and applying constructive criticism and feedback that others might have for me (Prov. 10:17; 17:10; 25:12).
18. _____ I am rarely judgmental or critical of others (Matt. 7:1-5).
19. _____ Others would say that I am slow to speak, quick to listen, and good at seeing things from their perspective (James 1:19-20).
- _____ **Total**

Principle 4: Receive the Gift of Limits

20. _____ I've never been accused of "trying to do it all" or of biting off more than I could chew (Matt. 4:1-11).
21. _____ I am regularly able to say "no" to requests and opportunities than risk overextending myself (Mark 6:30-32).
22. _____ I recognize the different situations where my unique, God-given personality can be either a help or a hindrance in responding appropriately (Ps. 139; Rom. 12:3; 1 Pet. 4:10).
23. _____ It's easy for me to distinguish the difference between when to help carry someone else's burden (Gal. 6:2) and when to let go so they can carry their own burden (Gal. 6:5).
24. _____ I have a good sense of my emotional, relational, physical, and spiritual capacities, intentionally pulling back to rest and fill my "gas tank" again (Mark 1:21-39).
25. _____ Those close to me would say I am good at balancing family, rest, work, and play in a biblical way (Ex. 20:8).
- _____ **Total**

Principle 5: Embracing Grieving and Loss

26. _____ I openly admit my losses and disappointments (Ps. 3:1-8; 5:1-12).
27. _____ When I go through a disappointment or loss, I reflect on how I'm feeling rather than pretend nothing is wrong (2 Sam. 1:4; 17-27; Ps. 51:1-17).
28. _____ I take time to grieve my losses as David (Ps. 69) and Jesus did (Matt. 26:39, John 11:35; 12:27).
29. _____ People who are in great pain and sorrow tend to seek me out because it's clear to them that I am in touch with the losses and sorrows in my own life (2 Cor. 1:3-7).
30. _____ I am able to cry and experience depression or sadness, explore the reasons behind it, and allow God to work in me through it (Ps. 42; Matt. 26: 36-46).
- _____ **Total**

Principle 6: Make Incarnation Your Way of Loving Well

31. _____ I am regularly able to enter into other people's world and feelings connecting deeply with them and taking time to imagine what it feels like to live in their shoes (John 1:1-14, 2 Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:3-5).
32. _____ People close to me would describe me as a responsive listener (Prov. 29:11; James 1:19).
33. _____ I have a healthy sense of who I am, where I've come from, what my values are, likes, passions, dislikes, and so on (John 13:3).
34. _____ I am able to accept myself just the way I am (John 13:1-3; Rom. 12:3).
35. _____ I am able to form deep relationships with people from different backgrounds, cultures, races, educational, and economic classes (John 4:1; Acts 10-11).
36. _____ People close to me would say that I suffer with those who suffer and rejoice with those who rejoice (Rom. 12:15).
37. _____ I am good about inviting people to adjust and correct my previous assumptions about them (Prov. 20:5; Col. 3:12-14).
38. _____ When I confront someone who has hurt or wronged me, I speak more in the first person ("I" and "me") about how I am feeling rather than speak in blaming tones ("you" or "they") about what was done (Prov. 25:11; Eph. 4:29-32).
39. _____ I rarely judge others quickly but instead am a peacemaker and reconciler (Matt. 7:1-5).
40. _____ People would describe me as someone who makes "loving well" my number-one aim (John 13:34-35; 1 Cor. 13).
- _____ **Total**

Inventory Results

For each group of questions:

- Add your answers to get the total for that group. Write your totals on the total line for each section.
- Next, plot your answers and connect the dots to create a graph on the bottom of this page.

- Finally, see the final page for interpretations of your level of emotional health in each area. What patterns do you discern?

Part A:
General Formation and Leadership Questions 1-7 Total ___/28

Part B:
Principle One: Look Beneath the Surface 1-6 ___/24
Principle Two: Break the Power of the Past 7-12 ___/24
Principle Three: Live in Brokenness and Vulnerability 13-19 ___/28
Principle Four: Accept the Gift of Limits 20-25 ___/24
Principle five: Embrace Grieving and Loss 26-30 ___/20
Principle six: Make Incarnation Your Model for Loving Well 31-40 ___/40

	A	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6
	28	24	24	28	24	20	40
Emotional Adult	23	20	20	23	20	17	30
Emotional Adolescent	17	15	15	17	15	13	23
Emotional Child	12	10	10	12	10	9	16
Emotional Infant	7	6	6	7	6	5	9

Interpretation Guide: Levels of Maturity

Emotional Infant: Like a physical infant, I look for other people to take care of me more than I look to care for them. I often have difficulty in describing and experiencing my feelings in healthy ways and I rarely enter the emotional world of others. I am consistently driven by a need for gratification, often using others as objects to meet my needs, and am unaware of how my behavior is effecting/hurting them. People sometimes perceive me as inconsiderate, insensitive, and self-centered.

Emotional Children: Like a physical child, when life is going my way and I am receiving all the things I want and need, I am content and seem emotionally well-adjusted. However, as soon as disappointment, stress, tragedy, or anger enter the picture, I quickly unravel inside. I interpret disagreement as a personal offense and am easily hurt by others. When I don't get my way, I often complain, throw an emotional tantrum, withdraw, manipulate, drag my feet, become sarcastic, or take revenge. I have difficulty calmly discussing with others what I want and expect from them in a mature loving way.

Emotional Adolescents: Like a physical adolescent, I know the right ways I should behave in order to “fit in” mature, adult society. I can feel threatened and alarmed inside when I am offered constructive criticism, quickly becoming defensive. I subconsciously keep records on the love I give out, so I can ask for something in return at a later time. When I am in conflict, I might admit some fault in the matter, but will insist on demonstrating guilt on the other party, proving why they are more to blame. Because of my commitment to self-survival, I have trouble really listening to another person’s pain, disappointments, or needs without becoming preoccupied with myself.

Emotional Adult: I can respect and love others without having to change them or becoming critical and judgmental. I don’t expect anyone to be perfect in meeting my relational needs, whether it be my spouse, parents, friends, boss, or pastor. I love and appreciate people for who they are as whole individuals, the good and the bad, and not for what they can give me or how they behave. I take responsibility for me own thoughts, feelings, goals, and actions. When under stress, I don’t fall into a victim mentality or blame game. I can state my own beliefs and values to those who disagree with me—without becoming adversarial. I am able to accurately self-assess my limits, strengths, and weaknesses and freely discuss them with others. Deeply in tune with my own emotions and feelings, I can move into the emotional worlds of others, meeting them at the place of their feelings, needs, and concerns. I am deeply convinced that I am absolutely loved by Christ, that I have nothing to prove.¹⁸²

¹⁸²Information for the inventory, its evaluation, and interpretation used by permission: Scazerro, Peter and Warren Byrd. *The Emotionally Healthy Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003.

APPENDIX 3

READING NOTE GUIDE

5 Thresholds of Faith

(Adapted from *I Once was Lost* by Don Everts and Doug Schaupp)

Introduction:

Why Thresholds?

Thresholds are liminal spaces

What is LIMINALITY?

What is it like for someone to take steps towards Jesus?

It's MYSTERIOUS

It's ORGANIC

How can we help them on their journey?

From DISTRUST to TRUST?

From COMPLACENT to CURIOUS?

From BEING CLOSED TO CHANGE to BEING OPEN TO CHANGE?

Threshold One: Trusting a Christian:

- Distrust has become the norm

“Religion is suspect. Church is weird, and Christians are hypocrites”

“Trust is always a gift of the heart... it may just be the most precious thing in life next to love”

“Relationships, genuine friendships are our currency.”

We need to not only survive, but THRIVE in our context of distrust

- Our reactions to “distrust”

We develop an AWARENESS of our own gut reactions to distrust

DEFEND- We know there is nothing we personally have done wrong and we want to defend our reputation

BRUISE- Our ego becomes bruised and we become reluctant to put our heart on the line again

AVOID- We distance ourselves

JUDGE- We lash out with a condescending attitude

ARGUE- We receive distrust as a challenge

***When we argue, we deceive ourselves into thinking that we are serving them, but this actually derails their journey of faith

Because trust develops over time, we need to learn how to be unfazed by trust

PRAY when we are tempted to DEFEND- Intercede for stuff in their life- family, concerns, hopes, joys, strengths, etc.

LEARN when we feel tempted to BRUISE- Try to understand the other person's world from their perspective and sympathize with them.

***Following Jesus' lead, we need to learn how to ask good questions of those that are annoying or distrustful

***Never treat people like projects

BOND when we feel tempted to AVOID- Rather than walking in wide circles around them, we can talk with them and do what they do

***Jesus chose to leave his comfort zone and walk where we walked.

***Accepting vs. endorsing behavior

AFFIRM when we are tempted to JUDGE- Look for the REAL good and affirm it

***Paul affirmed the good in the practices of others in his writings in scripture

WELCOME when we are tempted to ARGUE- We can choose to welcome them into our life rather than posturing over and against them.

***Jesus opened his arms to others with hospitality and transparency. His lifestyle and priorities speak volumes

***We cannot simply enter the lives of others, we must be willing to allow them to enter.

Threshold Two: Becoming Curious

- Just because someone trusts you it doesn't mean that they are super curious about Jesus.
- Curiosity blossoms over time
- Three Levels:

AWARENESS- of options never considered

ENGAGEMENT- Generates more curiosity as they engage with their new Christian friend and that lifestyle (ie. Reading the bible on their own)

EXCHANGE- being so curious you want to exchange ideas, ask questions, and offer your opinions

***A common mistake s for Christians to mistake someone's curiosity for genuine openness or seeking.

- Provoke Curiosity:

Encourage QUESTIONS

***Jesus was asked over 183 questions, answered only 3, but asked 304 in return

***A good question is worth a thousand answers

***Sometimes when someone asks a question, an answer is the last thing they need. They need someone to stoke the fire of curiosity

Use parables/ stories

***Like fish hooks: Once they are stuck, they beg further inquiry, further thought and further questions.

***Jesus used parables because they drew people in, and the purpose was to invite inquiry and curiosity

***Look for parables all around us in everyday objects

Live Curiously

*** Living counter culturally causes people to pause and ask questions

*** The “marginalized” people in Jesus’ time expected to be treated like second class citizens, but Jesus honored them and made them the focus of the crowd

***Soil can look barren and unworthy, but when we dig deep and help other uncover their curiosity, seed can sprout

***Practicing Christian community is pivotal in living curiously

*** Focus on your favorite Jesus story of the week and share it with your friends

***Beware of “Dousing Curiosity”- If someone has a thimble full of curiosity, don’t give them every apologetics answer you have been storing up. Assess their curiosity and respond accordingly

Curiosity opens doors-

*** People need support and encouragement while they navigate this threshold

Threshold Three: Opening Up to Change

- “What would we do if we were really serious about trying to reach _____?”
- A heart that is becoming open to change is much like a little seed’s effort to send forth its first shoot
- Not only do people want to discuss spiritual issues they are curious about, but they also want good and satisfying answers. Their own lack, their own life, makes them open to considering a new way of life
- This is the most difficult threshold to overcome

The realization that they need to see the world in a new light

*Questioning your own worldview and contemplating Christianity for yourself is revolutionary

- Be PATIENT as their journey unfolds

*As they “try on” what it might look like to change

*Patience gives the gift of space and permission to explore- The freedom to ponder the “what ifs”

- *They need to know that they have a friend no matter what they decide
- *Practice ENDURING PRAYER- Prayer is essential!
- *We need to enlist the help of others to help us endure interceding for our friends
- Challenging as Jesus Challenged
 - *How can we help our friends move towards being open to change?
 - *Sometimes we need our excuses ignored and our fears pointed out
 - *Sometimes we need someone else to be frustrated by the pains in our life
 - *Jesus touched the pain of the broken- Woman at the Well (John 4)
 - ***GENTLE AFFIRMATION
 - ***GENTLE HONESTY (non-judgmental truthfulness)
 - ***ASK good questions and LISTEN compassionately
 - *Jesus MOBILIZED the self-pitying and the fearful-
The Paralytic by the Pool (John 5)
 - ***He called the man to do something about it
 - Often our friends lack the courage to make life-changing decisions
 - *** How can we lovingly challenge them?
 - Ask God for a sign
 - Seek God with them through prayer together
 - Serve- Putting scripture into action
 - * Jesus AGITATED the complacent
 - ***Nicodemus liked his old way of viewing the world. He needed someone to jostle him out of it
 - ***Sometimes the most loving thing we can do for someone is be direct and call them out on how they are afraid to change
 - * Jesus CONNECTED THE DOTS for the confused and befuddled
 - *** We are often helping our friends connect dots and interpret things correctly
 - *** Some of us are comfortable with gentle truth and empathy, others like challenging people to action
 - *** Jesus served people by challenging them in a way that made sense to WHO they were and WHERE they were in life

Threshold Four: Seeking After God

- Leaning into the journey they are on and purposefully seek answers and resolution
- When someone is truly seeking, there is an urgency and purpose to their seeking
- “Phantom Seekers” vs. True Spiritual Seekers
 - *Phantom Seekers
 - ***Their posture lacks urgency
 - ***Might be using questions for deflecting the conversation from going deeper

- * True Seekers
 - *** Seek JESUS not just GOD
 - Want to know if Jesus can be trusted
 - Have a clear focus of their pursuit
 - *** Seekers COUNT THE COST
 - It's not just about "fire insurance"
 - *** Seekers SPEND TIME with Christians
 - They have decided that being uncomfortable at some level is worth it
- * People often need help becoming true seekers
 - *** Explicitly challenge them to become a seeker- tell them to keep asking questions and looking for answers
 - *** People need to be challenged at this stage
- * Live out the kingdom in front of them
 - *** It helps them SEEK Jesus not just GOD
 - *** It helps them COUNT THE COSTS
 - *** It helps them SOAK IN CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY
 - *** They need to see the good, but we also need to be open about our struggles and convictions and messy reconciliations
 - SHOW THEM how to build their lives on Jesus' words- As God speaks through your devotions, tell them how God is challenging you or leading you
 - Open up your PRAYER LIFE to them-
 - Provide SATISFYING ANSWERS to their initial questions. **(Often times apologetics answers are not satisfying to them. They want answers that are personal, real-life experiences)**
 - * By opening yourself and your struggles with them, you show them the Gospel at work.
 - * Framework for apologetic answers:
 - AFFIRM- be wildly enthusiastic about their questions, bless their curiosity
 - TRANSLATE- Think about what you want to say and bring it down into your own life
 - TRANSPARENT- Let your answers be confessional. Be open to sharing your struggles with your friends
 - INSERT YOURSELF AS A CASE STUDY- "Let's look at someone like me as a Hindu, Muslim, etc.
 - CHALLENGE- Answer the question, but

always bring it back to them, “What about you?”

* MODEL WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE TO SEEK after Jesus in your own life. Do this in front of your friends.

- Create safe space for people to seek- Churches can be really overwhelming

Threshold Five: Entering the Kingdom

- Resembles traditional models of evangelism
- Calls for decision and commitment
- Be appropriately urgent
 - * Ask them explicitly to enter the kingdom
 - * If they say no, find out why and work through their roadblocks
 - * Honestly help them resolve roadblocks
 - * Help them focus on Jesus and central issues
 - * Study passages from the Gospels with them that deal with salvation and lostness
 - * Encourage new believers to tell the story of their journey of faith
 - * Before asking, warm them up to the decision that lies ahead
- Be clear, but don't oversimplify. Need a concise summary of what Jesus and His kingdom are all about
 - * Draw pictures; two circles; Romans Road; etc.
- Kingdom life
 - * Growth is not automatic
 - * Do not leave your friends to be orphans!!
 - * Commit yourself to them- Mentor and disciple them
 - ***Set up 6-8 weeks of intense mentoring/ discipleship with them
 - One on one! Not a class
 - *** Three phases of mentorship:
 - HELPING YOUR FRIENDS SECURE THEIR DECISION
 - HELPING THEM DEVELOP KINGDOM HABITS
 - * Prayer
 - * Studying scripture
 - * Get them connected into a church community
 - * Get them to tell their story
 - * Get them serving in some way
 - GUIDING NEW BELIEVERS TRANSITION INTO COMMUNITY
 - * Small group or some long term sustainable care for them

APPENDIX 4

CHURCH CULTURAL OBSERVATION

Taken from *Culture Shift*¹⁸³

Analyzing your Church's Current Culture

Instructions: Consider each of these ingredients carefully and write your assessment of it. Hold on to your responses.

1. Look at leadership and values.
 - Who are the culture setters in the church? (Are they the elected or appointed leaders, or are there unelected leaders who shape the church culture more? Who is *the* leader in setting the culture here at this church?) In your church, one or two leaders may dominate everyone else. Is there a prominent family or persons in the church who control the pastor even though they may not be in a formal leadership position? Do your leadership team members energize one another with the common values they hold, or do they assert conflicting interests?
 - What are the primary values exhibited by those who lead here (the senior pastor, the board, unelected but influential leaders in the church)?
 - What are the real values coming from each major leadership group? How much unity exists between these groups? In what ways do they clash?

Example: Several long-term board members and their families are keeping the church the way it has always been. They value an “as is” culture and are holding the church back with their influence

2. Look at the vision statement of your church.
 - Is your vision expressed in a serious written document that leaders and the congregation know and embrace?
 - Does your vision statement communicate what you really believe and live?
 - If it does, what are the cultural values it clearly spells out? In not, where are the gaps?
 - If you don't have a written statement, what is the implied or assumed vision?

Write your assessment of your vision statement and how you are or aren't living it.

3. Look at your symbols, ceremonies, and celebrations

¹⁸³ Lewis, Robert and Wayne Cordeiro. *Culture Shift: Transforming Your Church from the Inside Out*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2005.

- What symbols do you see when you look around your church facility? What do these things say about what you really value? What do they communicate about your culture?
- What ceremonies and rituals does your church honor? How popular are they with the congregation?
- Who are the heroes in your church- the members who are most celebrated, honored, and emulated? What cultural values do these heroes represent?

Write your assessment.

Example: We honor people with strong teaching gifts and people who are generous givers. They get most of the attention at our church.

4. Look at yourself as a leader.

- What do I really value? (Ruthless honesty is required here!)
- What am I really trying to do and build here at this church?
- Is it my passion to build a kingdom culture that honors and serves God, or a culture that rewards me?
- What are my measurements of success as a leader? Do they match up with what I say my real values are?

Boil It Down

Now it's time to boil down all the observations you've written in this chapter and draw a conclusion. Be as specific as possible.

You might decide, for example, that "A few power players drive our culture. It's a programming-based culture that draws people who primarily want to be entertained." Or you might be even blunter: "Our culture lacks kingdom values. Our values are nothing more than traditions which we follow because they're comfortable and familiar." Maybe your conclusion is a metaphor: "We're like a country club where our primary accomplishments are to take care of each other." Maybe your conclusion is a self-confession: "I don't know what I'm excited about. I used to have spiritual passion, but I've pretty much lost it." Or maybe you will see how your church has tapped potential and energy resting just beneath the surface, waiting to be released.

APPENDIX 5

EVALUATION OF CHURCH OUTREACH PRACTICES FORM

1. How does your church network with others to accomplish The Great Commission?
2. How do the current outreach practices proclaim the Gospel?
3. How do the current outreach practices demonstrate creativity and boldness?
4. What would you do differently to improve the way the Gospel is being communicated?
5. What sort of results do the current outreach practices produce?
6. How does the church empower individuals to advance the Kingdom of God locally?
7. What is the system of accountability?
8. What are the theological/scriptural foundations for outreach practices?
9. How does the church measure excellence in outreach practices?
10. Do the outreach practices meet the church's measure of excellence?
11. How does the church engage the community?
12. How is diversity of cultures, traditions and values reflected in the outreach practices?
13. How does the church work to identify, call out and equip new leaders for outreach?
14. How does the church provide opportunities for people to connect with God?
15. How effective have the current outreach practices been in reaching the lost?
16. How many people have come to Christ because of outreach efforts?
17. What are the current outreach practices that are geared toward specific populations (i.e., Emerging Adults, teens, etc.)?

APPENDIX 6
INTERACTION REPORT FORM

INTERACTION REPORT

DATE: _____

Who did you talk to?

What did you talk about?

When did you interact with this individual?

Where did you interact with this person?

How do you feel the interaction went? Why?

What would you do differently next time?

What, if anything, would you like assistance with?

APPENDIX 7
GROUP OBSERVATION FORM

Group Observation Form

Session #: _____ Date: _____

Participants: _____

Topic(s): _____

Data/Observations: _____

Analysis: _____

Plan/ Action Steps: _____

Quotes: _____

APPENDIX 8

EMERGING ADULT KNOWLEDGE TEST

Name: _____

1. What age group does "Emerging Adulthood" span? (1 point)
 - a. 16-20 years-old
 - b. 18-25 years-old
 - c. 25-30 years-old
 - d. over 30 years old
2. Select the adjectives that accurately describe the "Emerging Adulthood": (1 point)
 - a. Entitled, lazy, broke, spoiled
 - b. Technology savvy, smart, entrepreneur
 - c. Creative, educated, liberal
 - d. Misunderstood, targeted, struggling
 - e. Other _____
3. What would an Emerging Adult say is the most important thing to them? (1 point)
 - a. Experiences
 - b. Relationships
 - c. Money/Career
 - d. Family
 - e. Purpose
4. Name the Five Key Traits of Emerging Adulthood: (5 points)
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____
 - e. _____
5. What is the best way to engage and connect with the Emerging Adult? (1 point)
 - a. Avoid them
 - b. Talk to them in person
 - c. Minister to them weekly
 - d. Email or text them
 - e. Communicate with them through social media
 - f. Other _____
6. What percentage of Emerging Adults attend church? (1 point)
 - a. 10%
 - b. 30%
 - c. 27%
 - d. 73%
 - e. none of the above

APPENDIX 9

DEFINING SPHERES OF INFLUENCE

Text: 2 Corinthians 10:13-16 (ESV):

“¹³ But we will not boast beyond limits but will boast only with regard to the area of influence God assigned to us, to reach even to you. ¹⁴ For we are not overextending ourselves, as though we did not reach you. For we were the first to come all the way to you with the gospel of Christ. ¹⁵ We do not boast beyond limit in the labors of others. But our hope is that as your faith increases, our area of influence among you may be greatly enlarged, ¹⁶ so that we may preach the gospel in lands beyond you, without boasting of work already done in another’s area of influence.”

- Where do you spend your time each week?
- Where are you a “regular”? (same time, same place)
- Who are the people that God seems to put in your path in these places?
- Who are the people within each of these places that tend to naturally ask questions about and want to discuss spiritual things?

Things to remember:

- Just because the individual might be someone you spend time with, it does not mean that person is necessarily in your sphere of influence.
- When someone else is engaged in spiritual conversation (especially within their sphere of influence) do not interrupt. Simply listen to what is going on and pray.
- Spheres can and will change. Go where the holy Spirit is leading you and be willing to listen and pray as the Spirit leads individuals to you.
- Set biases aside and try to view others through the eyes of God.
- Ask open ended questions to get people talking and show genuine interest.
- Utilize FORM (Family, Occupation, Recreation, Message) to get to know more about the individual the Spirit has lead you to.
- LIKE- LISTEN- UNDERSTAND- BELIEVE- RECEIVE- REPRODUCE
 - They must LIKE you before they will LISTEN
 - If they LISTEN, they can UNDERSTAND
 - If they UNDERSTAND, they can BELIEVE
 - If they BELIEVE, they can RECEIVE
 - If they RECEIVE, they will REPRDUCE

APPENDIX 10

REFLECTIVE JOURNALING ACTIVITY FORM

REFLECTIVE JOURNAL ENTRY

Name: _____ Date: _____

What have you learned? (Reflection on your strengths and growth process)

What do you need or want to learn and/or practice more? (Reflection on challenges, opportunities for growth, and learning)

APPENDIX 11

Trust Inventory, Adapted from *I Once Was Lost*, p. 39

The Trust Inventory: How Much A Trust Do You Have?

To help you think through how trust you have with a friend or family member, ask yourself some simple questions about that relationship:

- Have they ever called me when they had a problem?
- Have I ever called them for help for anything?
- Have they ever been real with me when they were angry or sad?
- Do I hide my honest emotions or moods from them?
- Have they ever sked me for advice?
- Do we ever just have fun together?
- When do I feel most connected with them- and what are we doing then?

APPENDIX 12

PERFORMING A CULTURAL EXEGESIS

What is a “Cultural Exegesis”?

- “...discovering why people in a particular culture do what they do by observing them and viewing their cultural influences from their perspective rather than interpreting their behavior through our own cultural lenses.”¹⁸⁴

What is necessary to do a cultural exegesis?

- Immersion in the culture... surround yourself with it.
- Personal engagement in the culture... make friends.
- The Holy Spirit is your defense... against getting caught up in the culture itself (Think, “in it, not of it”).

Where to start:

- Look at the leaders:
 - Who are the culture setters?
 - What are the primary values exhibited by the group you are observing?
 - What are the real values being communicated by the group?
- Vision:
 - What is the vision of the people group? Is it implied or written?
 - Does the vision match the actions of the people group?
 - What cultural values are represented in the group’s vision?
 - Assess how the vision is lived out by the people in general.
- Symbols, ceremonies, and celebrations:
 - What symbols do you among the people?
 - What do these things say about what they really value?
 - What ceremonies or rituals do the people honor?
 - Who are the heroes among the people (who do they celebrate, honor or emulate)?
 - What cultural values do these heroes portray?
- Look at yourself:
 - What do I really value?
 - What am I really trying to accomplish with this people group?
 - Am I passionate about bringing Christ to these people? Or simply bringing glory to myself?
 - What are my measurements of success?
 - Do I live by the values I say I believe?
 - How do my values compare to kingdom values?

Finally, begin to generalize your observations and begin to draw conclusions. Try to be as specific as possible. When assessing the people group, try to see their culture through their eyes rather than your own. Write your assessment and be prepared to share it in group.

¹⁸⁴Goodman, Ernest. “Cultural Exegesis.” March 9, 2010. Accessed online March 26, 2017. <http://missionsmisunderstood.com/2010/03/09/cultural-exegesis/>.

APPENDIX 13

“WHO AM I IN CHRIST?”

(Adapted from Neil T. Anderson's *Victory Over the Darkness*)

Here is a list of 27 aspects of our identity in Christ. It can be used to regularly re-affirm who we are in Christ. Since faith in God's grace to us is both expressed and intensified by the spoken word (see 2 Corinthians 4:13) it is suggested that you read it aloud.

IN CHRST, I AM ACCEPTED...

I am a child of God (John 1:12)
I am a friend of Jesus Christ (John 15:15)
I have been justified and accepted by God (Romans 5:1)
I am united with the Lord, and I am one with him in spirit (1 Corinthians 6:17)
I have been bought with a price, and I belong to God (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)
I am a member of Christ's body (1 Corinthians 12:27)
I have been redeemed and forgiven of all my sins (Colossians 1:13-14)
I am complete in Christ (Colossians 2:9-10)
I have direct access to the throne of grace through Jesus Christ (Hebrews 4:14-16)

IN CHRIST, I AM SECURE...

I am free from condemnation (Romans 8:1-2)
I am assured that God works for my good in all circumstances (Romans 8:28)
I cannot be separated from the love of God (Romans 8:31-39)
I have been established, anointed, and sealed by God (2 Corinthians 1:21-22)
I am hidden with Christ in God (Colossians 3:1-4)
I am confident that God will complete the good works he started in me (Philippians 1:4)
I am a citizen of heaven (Philippians 3:20)
I do not have the spirit of fear but of power, love, and a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7)
I am born of God, and the evil one cannot touch me (1 John 5:18)

IN CHRIST, I AM SIGNIFICANT...

I am the branch of Jesus Christ, the true vine, and a channel of his life (John 15:5)
I am God's temple (1 Corinthians 3:16)
I am a minister of reconciliation for God (2 Corinthians 5:17-21)
I am sealed with Jesus Christ in the heavenly realm (Ephesians 2:4)
I am God's workmanship, created to do good works prepared in advance (Ephesians 2:10)
I may approach God with freedom and confidence (Ephesians 3:12)
I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength (Ephesians 4:13)
I am an heir of God, co-heir with Christ (Galatians 4:7)
I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit (John 15:16)

APPENDIX 14

GOSPEL FLUENCY ASSESSMENT

GOSPEL FLUENCY ASSESSMENT

(adapted from *Gospel Fluency*, by Jeff Vanderstelt)¹⁸⁵

Fill out the following assessment prayerfully, asking God to help you be honest with the questions presented. However, remember that assessment is not a measure of your sanctification. A higher score does not equal higher holiness points! Being gospel fluent does not necessarily mean you have a deeper, better relationship with Jesus. This assessment is simply to identify where you want to grow in gospel fluency.

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree), rate the following:

Knowing the gospel

- ___ I understand and can explain why people are sinners and deserve God's wrath for their sin.
- ___ I understand and can explain why God cannot offer forgiveness without a sacrifice for sin.
- ___ I understand and can explain why it is important for redemption that Jesus be man and God.
- ___ I understand and can explain why the sinless life of Jesus is important to our salvation.
- ___ I understand and can explain why the death of Jesus is important to our salvation.
- ___ I understand and can explain why the resurrection of Jesus is important to our salvation.
- ___ I understand and can explain why the ascension of Jesus is important to our salvation.
- ___ I understand and can explain the role of each member of the Trinity -Father, Son and Holy Spirit- in salvation
- ___ I understand and can explain what part the "imputed righteousness of Jesus" plays in salvation
- ___ I understand and can explain the difference between justification (imputed righteousness) and Sanctification (living a holy life)
- ___ I understand and can explain what it means to have my identity transformed by the gospel.
- ___ I understand and can explain how the gospel fits into the overall story of God as revealed in the Bible
- _____ TOTAL (Range: 12-60)

¹⁸⁵Vanderstelt, Jeff. *Gospel Fluency*.

Internalizing (Applying) the Gospel

- ___ I frequently ask questions like, “how does the gospel have to do with this?” or “how does the truth about Jesus’s person and work transform this area of my life?”
- ___ I am generally able to connect my sin to a specific area of unbelief in or failure to rejoice in the gospel.
- ___ Prayer is usually the first resort when trouble or temptation comes my way.
- ___ I am generally able to take risks, even knowing those risks may result in failure, because I know I am accepted by God through Jesus.
- ___ I am not fearful of God’s wrath against me, but know, even when I’ve sinned, that he loves me and delights to lavish me with grace in Jesus.
- ___ I am able to freely express my faults to others.
- ___ I am able to see God’s goodness even in dark times.
- ___ I am forgiven and totally accepted by God.
- ___ I am generally able to examine the deeper motives of my heart without becoming fearful, angry, or discouraged.
- ___ I am teachable and open to rebuke, correction, and instruction, even from those that are less experienced and less mature than me.
- ___ I want others, both believers and unbelievers, to experience the freedom of the gospel and am willing to sacrifice to be part of that mission.
- ___ TOTAL (Range: 12-60)

Speaking the Gospel

- ___ The gospel has freed me to move outward, towards believers and unbelievers, to serve them, love them, and speak the truth in love.
- ___ Jesus is more and more the subject of my conversations.
- ___ I am aware of my inability to fix life, people, and problems.
- ___ I believe that the gospel, as it is fully revealed in the Bible, has the power to radically transform the lives of my brothers and sisters in Christ.
- ___ When speaking, I ground what I say in the word of God, not just in Biblical or theological concepts.
- ___ My first response to sins, failures, troubles, and conflict with others is to pray for supernatural help from the Spirit.

___ I am able to help guide a person towards discovering heart motivation or idolatry that may be behind their behavior.

___ I am able to rejoice in Jesus, even while confronting someone in their sin.

___ I am confident in the convicting and encouraging power of the Holy Spirit and therefore do not feel that I have to have all the right answers before speaking to both believers and unbelievers.

___ My greatest desire in addressing someone's sin, encouraging them, or challenging them, is to see them rejoicing in Jesus, not simply change their behavior.

___ I am able to hear someone's story and make meaningful connections to God's story.
(Creation/ Fall/ Redemption/ Restoration).

___ I am comfortable telling my own story (including my sin and suffering) to believers and unbelievers.

___ TOTAL (Range:12-60)

APPENDIX 15

FAITH THRESHOLDS EVALUATION FORM

Threshold #1- Trusting a Christian

Who in your sphere of influence is at THIS threshold?

What is your “next step” with each person at this threshold?

Ways I am stifling these relationships (if at all):

The kingdom habit I want to work on to foster trust:

Threshold #2- Becoming Curious

Who in your sphere of influence is at THIS threshold?

What is your “next step” with each person at this threshold?

Ways I am provoking curiosity (Be specific! Think F.O.R.M.)

The way I am living curiously is by:

Threshold #3- Opening to Change

Who in your sphere of influence is at THIS threshold?

What is your “next step” with each person at this threshold?

In what ways do I need to demonstrate more patience at this threshold?

In what ways am I challenging each person at this threshold?

Threshold #4- Seeking After God

Who in your sphere of influence is at THIS threshold?

What is your “next step” with each person at this threshold?

How am I living out the kingdom in front of each person?

How am I creating a safe place for each person to seek God? (Be specific!)

Threshold #5- Entering the Kingdom

Who in your sphere of influence is at THIS threshold?

What is your “next step” with each person at this threshold?

How am I creating a sense of urgency with each person? (Be specific!)

What method of explaining the Gospel will be most helpful for each person?

How can I help each person transition into kingdom living from here?

APPENDIX 16

ROMANS ROAD

Romans Road to Salvation

Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." *We all have sin in our hearts. Admit that you are a sinner.*

Romans 6:23a "...The wages of sin is death..." *Sin has an ending. It results in spiritual death that separate us from God. Understand that you deserve death for your sin.*

Romans 6:23b "...But the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." *Salvation is a free gift from God to you! Ask God to forgive you and save you.*

Romans 5:8 "...but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." *Jesus died on the cross to pay sin's penalty. God loves you!*

Romans 10:9,10 "...Because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved." *If you know that God is knocking on your heart's door, ask Him to come into your life.*

Jesus said, "Behold I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him..." (Revelation 3:20a) *Is Jesus knocking on your heart's door? Respond by praying a prayer like this: I admit that I am a sinner. I believe that you died on the cross for me, to save me. You did what I could not do for myself. I trust you to forgive my sin and give me eternal life as a free gift.*

Romans 10:13 "For 'everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'" *Call out to God in the name of Jesus!*

APPENDIX 17

FINAL PROJECT INSTRUCTIONS

FINAL PROJECT: Creating a Context-Specific, Culturally-Sensitive Plan for Engaging Emerging Adults Within the Community

Assignment:

Create a plan to engage with 18-25-year-olds containing the following criteria:

- Consider the culture of the church- What is it? How can you use it to support what you want to accomplish?
- Consider the culture of the people you want to reach- What elements are unique and important to consider in relationship building? How is “church” perceived? What “language” is being spoken? How can it be used to connect with the people of that specific culture?
- Identify locations (that you currently frequent) and the individuals whom fit into this age group (your spheres of influence)
- Assess 3-5 people’s spiritual journey thresholds
- For each person, create a next step(s) to help the person to the next stage. How will you challenge them to move forward to the next stage?

APPENDIX 18

COURSE EVALUATION FORM

COURSE EVALUATION-

On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being poor and 10 being excellent, please rate the instructor:

Please rate the instructor on:

1. ____ Knowledge of the material presented
2. ____ Use of a variety of teaching methods to enhance the learning experience
3. ____ Clarity of concepts and expectations
4. ____ Relevance of material selection
5. ____ Group coaching experience

On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being poor and 10 being excellent, please rate the content of the training course:

Please rate the course content on:

1. ____ Equipping outreach leaders to minister to Emerging Adults
2. ____ Audio and visual materials utilized
3. ____ Written materials (worksheets, handouts, etc.)
4. ____ Homework assignments supported learning objectives
5. ____ Learning outcomes being accomplished
6. ____ Cultural component

Please respond to the following statements with (A) Agree, (U) Undecided, or (D) Disagree:

1. ____ I have learned a lot through this training course.
2. ____ I am more equipped to engage with the Emerging Adult population because of this training.
3. ____ I have a clearer understanding of the missional call on my life.

4. ____ I am better equipped to build relationships with Emerging Adults.
5. ____ I feel more confident to share the Gospel with others.
6. ____ I have become a better Christian because of completing this training.

Please respond to the following questions:

1. What did you like about the course? _____

2. What could be done to improve the course? _____

3. Comments: _____

APPENDIX 19

TEACHING NOTES

Teaching Notes- "The Liminal Life"

I. **SESSION #1-** Introduction and Training Module #1

A. Introduction

1. Who is the course designed for?

- a) Leaders
- b) Parents
- c) Evangelists

B. Syllabus

1. What is the course designed to do? (objectives)

a) Goals and Objectives

- (1) Understanding the Emerging Adult developmental stage
 - (a) Identifying Emerging Adult developmental traits
 - (b) Applying new concepts to existing and new relationships
 - (c) evaluating current evangelism efforts before and after the application of new techniques
- (2) Expressing personal growth and cultural fluency
 - (a) Confronting personal biases that limit impact of evangelism efforts with Emerging Adults
 - (b) Learning to "hear" others life stories
 - (c) Sharing in a group setting about the results of applying new techniques to relationships
 - (d) Initiating new relationships and joining others on their journey
- (3) Improvement of communication skills that are specifically effective with Emerging Adults
 - (a) Learning basic life coaching skills
 - (b) Build active listening skills
 - (c) Use teachable moments
 - (d) Create liminal spaces for questions and exploration
 - (e) Communicate personal stories in the context of mentoring/discipleship relationships
- (4) Create a context-specific, culturally sensitive implementation plan for engaging Emerging Adults

b) Logistics and expectations

(1) When will the sessions take place?

- (a) 1 time per week, for 2 hours, for 6 weeks
- (b) Follow up coaching sessions available 1 time per week, for 3 weeks, following the sessions

(2) Where will the sessions meet? Where will the training be practiced?

- (a) Meeting at Chapel Hill Presbyterian Church

- (b) Skills practiced in all arenas of life
- 2. Rationale (why is the training important?)
 - a) We are commanded to "go" and make disciples
 - b) We are losing this group of young people from the church population
 - c) The future of the church is at stake
- 3. Need (How have we become complacent as a church?)
 - a) Sources of complacency
 - b) Removing complacency
- 4. Purpose
 - a) Learn to build relationships with this group of people
 - b) Become more effective in evangelism and outreach efforts
 - c) Improve relationships (parents of Emerging Adults)
 - d) Create rites of passage to help young people walk into adult maturity
 - e) Learn new ways to make the Gospel relevant in everyday life
- 5. Resources available
- C. Emerging Adult Knowledge Test
- D. Training topic #1- Self-awareness
 - 1. God's Glasses- Video
 - 2. Beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors
 - 3. Family history
 - 4. Personal experience
- E. Training topic #2- Emerging Adulthood
 - 1. Distinguishing characteristics of each generation
 - 2. Emerging Adult traits and developmental process
- F. Training topic #3- Cultural Fluency
 - 1. What is it?
 - 2. Why is it important?
 - 3. How do we accomplish this?
 - a) Cultural exegesis
- G. Application/ Action
 - 1. Inventory of Spiritual/Emotional Maturity
 - 2. Instructions for how to do a community observation- *Cultural Shift*
 - 3. Practice observing
 - 4. Further homework assignments
 - a) Make contact with an Emerging Adult, observing their culture. Be a student of them
 - b) Assignment: Observation of church culture
- 5. Evaluation:
 - a) Openness in sharing- personal biases
 - b) Evaluating evangelism strategies
 - c) Cultural exegesis proficiencies
 - d) Identification of Emerging Adulthood traits
- II. **SESSION #2-** Training module #2- Communication skills/ Five Thresholds
 - A. Review previous lesson and check in about homework
 - 1. Church cultural observation

2. ISEM
 - B. Review Emerging Adulthood developmental traits
 - C. Training topic #1: Communication skills- part 1
 1. Building trust (*I Once Was Lost*)
 2. Building rapport (*Law of Connection*)
 3. Creating God Space (*God Space*)
 - D. Training topic #2; Coaching skills- Part 1
 1. Establishing trust and intimacy
 2. Presence
 3. Practice coaching skills
 - E. Training topic #3- Intro to the Gospel- Personal story
 1. Share 3-5 min. testimony with one another- role play
 - F. Training topic #4- Intro to Five Thresholds of Faith
 1. Overview
 2. Threshold #1- Trusting a Christian
 3. Threshold #2- Becoming curious
 - G. Application/ Action
 1. Assessment of Communication styles (*Law of Connection*)
 2. Sharing personal stories with the group
 3. Further homework assignments-
 - a) Assignment- Build on Emerging Adult relationships using new skills (building rapport and establishing trust)
 - b) Assignment- Write out personal story (3-5 minutes)
 - c) Assignment- Complete Interaction Report
 - d) Assignment- Complete Reflective Journaling Activity
 - e) Assignment- Complete E.A. Community exegesis
 - H. Evaluation
 1. Proficiency in communication techniques- for building rapport and establishing trust
 2. Proficiency in building relationships- for building rapport and establishing trust
 3. Initiation of new relationships with EA- demonstration of appreciation For EA population
- III. SESSION #3 Training module #3**
- A. Review Previous week and check in about homework
 1. Feedback on Interaction Reports
 2. Feedback on Reflective Journal Entries
 3. Feedback from EA community cultural exegesis
 4. Personal story progress
 - B. Discuss community cultural exegesis and implications for evangelism
 - C. Training topic #1- Communication skills- part 2
 1. Communication styles
 2. Communication killers
 3. Non-Verbal communication
 - D. Training topic #2- Coaching skills- part 2
 1. Active listening
 2. Powerful questioning- intro
 - E. Training topic #3- Threshold #3- Opening Up to Change

F. Training topic #4- Threshold #4- Seeking After God

G. Application/Action

1. Assessment- Communication styles (*Law of Connection*)
2. Assessment- Quick-To-Listen
3. Assessment- Threshold evaluations for EA's
4. Role Play- Powerful questioning and active listening
5. Peer evaluations- Powerful questioning and active listening
6. Further homework assignments:
 - a) Assignment- Practice powerful questioning w/ EA
 - b) Assignment- Practice active listening w/ EA
 - c) Ongoing assignment- Interaction Reports
 - d) Ongoing assignment- Building relationships with EA
 - e) Ongoing assignment- Reflective Journaling Activity

H. Evaluation

1. Engagement of participant in group sessions
2. Engagement of participants with homework
3. Engagement of participants with EA with questions and active listening
4. Proficiency in communication skills- active listening
5. Proficiency in relationship building- establishing new relationships, building rapport and establishing trust
6. Understanding of EA developmental traits- utilizing cultural competency

IV. SESSION #4- Training module #4

A. Review previous week and check in about homework

1. Active listening
2. Powerful questioning
3. Feedback from Interaction Reports
4. feedback from Reflective Journaling Activity

B. Training topic #1- Gospel- *Gospel Fluency*

1. Defining the Gospel

C. Training topic #2- Cultural competency- *Culture Shift*

D. Training topic #3- Incarnational living

1. Discipleship
2. Identity
3. Missionary
4. Rhythms

E. Application/Action

1. Gospel Fluency Assessment
2. Practice sharing the Gospel in pairs
3. Cultural competency personal assessment
4. Further homework assignment:
 - a) Evaluating current evangelism strategies in light of new information- begin developing personal change plan

F. Evaluation

1. Engagement of participant in group sessions
2. Engagement of participants with homework assignments
3. Proficiency in communication skills- active listening, powerful questioning, direct communication

4. Proficiency in building relationships- Establishing new relationships, building trust and rapport
5. Understanding of EA developmental traits- Utilizing cultural competency

V. SESSION #5- Training module #5

- A. Review previous week and check in about homework
 1. Progress on change plans
 2. Feedback on Interaction Reports
 3. Feedback on Reflective Journaling Activity
- B. Group sharing
 1. "What have you learned?"- Reflections on strengths and areas of growth
 2. "What do you need to learn/practice more?"- Personal reflection on challenges, opportunities for growth and learning
- C. Training topic #1- Coaching skills- part 3
 1. Direct communication
 2. Powerful Questioning- part 2
 3. Creating awareness
- D. Training topic #2- Threshold #5- Entering the Kingdom/Discipleship
- E. Training topic #3- Change Plans
- F. Application/Action
 1. Role play- coaching, building rapport, active listening, powerful questioning and presence
 2. Complete change plan and be prepared to present in group
- G. Evaluation
 1. Engagement of participants with EA
 2. Engagement of participants in group process
 3. Engagement of participants with homework assignments
 4. Proficiency in communication and coaching skills- active listening, powerful questioning, direct communication, and creating awareness
 5. Proficiency in building relationships- Establishing new relationships, establishing trust and building rapport
 6. Understanding of E DEVELOPMENTAL TRAITS- Utilizing cultural competency

VI. SESSION #6- Training module #6

- A. Check in about homework
- B. Presentation of Change Plans
 1. Individual/group presentation
 2. Feedback
- C. Training topic- Coaching skills- part 4
 1. Designing actions
 2. Planning and goal setting
 3. Managing progress and accountability
- D. Application/Action
 1. Evaluation- Personal goal setting and designing next steps
 2. Evaluation personal progress
 3. Role play- real life scenarios

VII. CONCLUSION

- A. Debrief discussion

B. Course Evaluation

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